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IN THE HEART OF A FO

BY WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

THE REAL ISSUE

THE COURT OF BOYVILLE

STRATAGEMS AND SPOILS

IN OUR TOWN

A CERTAIN RICH MAN

THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH

GOD'S PUPPETS

THE MARTIAL ADVENTURES OF HENRY AND ME

IN THE HEART OF A FOOL

IN THE HEART OF A FOOL

BY

WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE
Author of "In Our Town," "A Certain Rich Man," "The Martial Adventures of Henry and Me," etc.

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THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1918

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IN THE HEART OF A FOOL

CHAPTER I

BEING STAGE DIRECTIONS, AND A CAST OF CHARACTERS

SUNSHINE and prairie grass—well in the foreground. For the background, perhaps a thousand miles away or more than half a decade removed in time, is the American Civil War. In the blue sky a meadow lark's love song, and in the grass the boom of the prairie chicken's wings are the only sounds that break the primeval silence, excepting the lisping of the wind which dimples the broad acres of tall grass—thousand upon thousand of acres—that stretch northward for miles. To the left the prairie grass rises upon a low hill, belted with limestone and finally merges into the mirage on the knife edge of the far horizon. To the southward on the canvas the prairie grass is broken by the heavy green foliage above a sluggish stream that writhes and twists and turns through the prairie, which rises above the stream and meets another limestone belt upon which the waving ripples of the unmowed grass wash southward to the eye's reach.

Enter R. U. E. a four-ox team hauling a cart laden with a printing press and a printer's outfit; following that are other ox teams hauling carts laden with tents and bedding, household goods, lumber, and provisions. A four-horse team hauling merchandise, and a span of mules hitched to a spring wagon come crashing up through the timber by the stream. Men and women are walking beside the oxen or the teams and are riding in the covered wagons. They are eagerly seeking something. It is the equality of opportunity that is supposed to be found in the virgin prairies of the new West. The men are nearly all veterans of the late war, for the most part bearded youngsters in their twenties or early thirties.

The women are their fresh young wives. As the procession halts before the canvas, the men and women begin to unpack the wagons and to line out on each side of an imaginary street in the prairie. The characters are discovered as follows:

Amos Adams, a red-bearded youth of twenty-nine and Mary Sands, his wife. They are printers and begin unpacking and setting up the printing material in a tent.

Dr. James Nesbit and Bedelia Satterthwaite, his wife, in the tent beside the Adamses.

Captain Ezra Morton, and Ruth his wife; he is selling a patent, self-opening gate.

Ahab Wright, in side whiskers, white neck-tie, flannel shirt and carefully considered trousers tucked in shiny boots.

Daniel Sands, Jane, his young wife, and Mortimer, her infant stepson. Daniel owns the merchandise in the wagon.

Casper Herdicker, cobbler, and Brunhilde Herdicker, his wife.

Herman Müller, bearded, coarse-featured, noisy; a Pennsylvania Dutchman, his faded, rope-haired, milk-eyed, sickly wife and Margaret, their baby daughter.

Kyle Perry, owner of the horses and spring wagon.

Dick Bowman, Ira Dooley, Thomas Williams, James McPherson, Dennis Hogan, a boy, laborers.

As other characters enter during the early pages of the story they shall be properly introduced.

As the actors unload their wagons the spectators may notice above their heads bright, beautiful and evanescent forms coming and going in and out of being. These are the visions of the pioneers, and they are vastly more real than the men and women themselves. For these visions are the forces that form the human crystal.

Here abideth these three: sunshine and prairie grass and blue sky, cloud laden. These for ages have held domain and left the scene unchanged. When lo—at Upper Middle Entrance,—enter love! And love witched the dreams and visions of those who toiled in the sunshine and prairie grass under the blue sky cloud laden. And behold what they visioned in the witchery of love, took form and spread upon the prai-

rie in wood and stone and iron, and became a part of the life of the Nation. Blind men in other lands, in other times looked at the Nation and saw only wood and stone and iron. Yet the wood and stone and iron should not have symbolized the era in America. Rather should the dreams and visions of the pioneers, of those who toiled under the sunshine and in the prairie grass have symbolized our strength. For half a century later when the world was agonizing in a death grapple with the mad gods of a crass materialism, mankind saw rising from the wood and stone and iron that had seemed to epitomize this Nation, a spirit which had lain hidden yet dormant in the Nation's life—a beautiful spirit of idealism strong, brave and humbly wise; the child of the dreams and visions and the love of humanity that dwelled in the hearts of the pioneers of that earlier time.

But this is looking forward. So let us go back to scene one, act one, in those days before the sunshine was shaded, the prairie grass worn off, and the blue sky itself was so stained and changed that the meadow-lark was mute!

And now we are ready for the curtain: and—music please.

CHAPTER II

IN WHICH WE INTRODUCE THE FOOL AND HIS LADY FAIR AND WHAT HE SAID IN HIS HEART—THE SAME BEING THE THEME ND THESIS OF THIS STORY

A STORY is a curious thing, that grows with a kind of consciousness of its own. Time was, in its invertebrate period of gestation when this story was to be Amos Adams's story. It was to be the story of one who saw great visions that were realized, who had from the high gods whispers of their plans. What a book it would have been if Amos and Mary could have written it—the story of dreams come true. But alas, the high gods mocked Amos Adams. Mary's clippings from the *Tribune*—a great litter of them, furnished certain dates and incidents for the story. Often when the *Tribune* was fresh from the press Mary and Amos would sit together in the printing office and Mary eaten with pride would clip from the damp paper the grandiloquent effusions of Amos that seemed to fit into other items that were to remind them of things which they could not print in their newspaper but which would be material for their book. What a bundle of these clippings there is! And there was the diary, or old-fashioned Memory Book of Mary Adams. What a pile of neatly folded sheets covered with Mary Adams' handwriting are there on the table by the window! What memories they revive, what old dead joys are brought to life, what faded visions are repainted. This is to be the Book—the book that they dreamed of in their youth—even before little Kenyon was born, before Jasper was born, indeed before Grant was born.

But now the years have written in many things and it will not be even their story. Indeed as life wrote upon their hearts its mysterious legend—the legend that erased many of their noble dreams and put iron into their souls, there is evidence in what they wrote that they thought it would be

Grant's story. Most parents think their sons will be heroes. But their boy had to do his part in the world's rough work and before the end the clippings and the notes in the Memory Book show that they felt that a hero in blue overalls would hardly answer for their Book. Then there came a time when Amos alone in his later years thought that it might be Kenyon's story; for Kenyon now is a fiddler of fame, and fiddlers make grand heroes. But as the clippings and the notes show forth still another story, the Book that was to be their book and story, may not be one man's or one woman's story. It may not be even the story of a town; though Harvey's story is tragic enough. (Indeed sometimes it has seemed that the story of Harvey, rising in a generation out of the sunshine and prairie grass, a thousand flued hell, was to be the story of the Book.) But now Harvey seems to be only a sign of the times, a symptom of the growth of the human soul. So the Book must tell the tale of a time and a place where men and women loved and strove and joyed or suffered and lost or won after the old, old fashion of our race; with only such new girdles and borders and frills in the record of their work and play as the changing skirts of passing circumstance require. The Book must be more than Amos Adams's or his son's or his son's son's story or his town's, though it must be all of these. It must be the story of many men and many women, each one working out his salvation in his own way and all the threads woven into the divine design, carrying along in its small place on the loom the inscrutable pattern of human destiny. But most of all it should be the story which shall explain the America that rose when her great day came—exultant, triumphant to the glorious call of an ideal, arose from sordid things environing her body and soul, and consecrated herself without stint or faltering hand to the challenge of democracy.

In the old days—the old days when Amos Adams was young—he printed the Harvey *Tribune* on a hand press. Mary spread the ink upon the types; he pulled the great lever that impressed each sheet; and as they worked they sang about the coming of the new day. As a soldier—a commissioned officer he had fought in the great Civil War for the truth that should make men free. And he was sure

in those elder days that the new day was just dawning. And Mary was sure too; so the readers of the *Tribune* were assured that the dawn was at hand. The editor knew that there were men who laughed at him for his hopes. But he and Mary, his wife, only laughed at men who were so blind that they could not see the dawn. So for many years they kept on rallying to whatever faith or banner or cause seemed surest in its promise of the sunrise. Green-backers, Grangers, Knights of Labor, Prohibitionists—these two crusaders followed all of the banners. And still there came no sunrise. Farmers' Alliance, Populism, Free Silver—Amos marched with each cavalcade. And was hopeful in its defeat.

And thus the years dragged on and made decades and the decades marshaled into a generation that became an era, and a city rose around a mature man. And still in his little office on a rickety side street, the *Tribune,* a weekly paper in a daily town, kept pointing to the sunrise; and Amos Adams, editor and proprietor, an old fool with the faith of youth, for many years had a book to write and a story to tell—a story that was never told, for it grew beyond him.

He printed the first edition of the *Tribune* in his tent under an elm tree in a vast, unfenced meadow that rose from the fringe of timber that shaded the Wahoo. Volume one, number one, told a waiting world of the formation of the town company of Harvey with Daniel Sands as president. It was one of thousands of towns founded after the Civil War—towns that were bursting like mushrooms through the prairie soil. After that war in which millions of men gave their youth and myriads gave their lives for an ideal, came a reaction. And in the decades that followed the war, men gave themselves to an orgy of materialism. Harvey was a part of that orgy. And the Ohio crowd, the group that came from Elyria—the Sandses, the Adamses, Joseph Calvin, Ahab Wright, Kyle Perry, the Kollanders [1] and all the rest except the Nesbits—were so considerable a part of Harvey in the beginning, that probably they were as guilty as the rest of the country in the crass riot of greed that followed

[1] The reader may be interested in seeing one of Mary Adams's clippings with a note attached. Here is one concerning Mrs. John

the war. They brought Amos Adams to Harvey because he was a printer and in those halcyon days all printers were supposed to be able to write; and he brought Mary—but did he bring Mary? He was never sure whether he brought her or she brought him. For Mary Sands—dear, dear Mary Sands—she had a way with her. She was not Irish for nothing, God bless her.

Amos always tried to be fair with Daniel Sands because he was Mary's brother; even though there was a time after he came home a young soldier from the war and found that Daniel Sands who hired a substitute and stayed at home, had won Esther Haley, who was pledged to Amos,—a time when Amos would have killed Daniel Sands. That passed, Mary, Daniel's sister, came; and for years Amos Adams bore Daniel Sands no grudge. What has all his money done for Daniel. It has ground the joy out of him—for one thing. And as for Esther, somewhere about Elyria, Ohio, the grass is growing over her grave and for forty years only Mortimer, her son, with her eyes and mouth and hair, was left in the world to remind Amos of the days when he was stark mad; and Mary, dear, dear, Irish Mary Sands, caught his heart upon the bounce and made him happy.

So let us say that Mary brought Amos to Harvey with the Ohio crowd, as Daniel Sands and his followers were known. The other early settlers came to grow up with the country and to make their independent fortunes; but Mary and Amos came to see the sunrise. For they were sure that men and women starting in a new world having found equality of opportunity, would not make this new world sordid, unfair

Kollander. The clipping from the Harvey *Tribune* of June, 1871, reads:

"Mrs. Rhoda Byrd Kollander arrived to-day from Elyria, Ohio. It is her first visit to Harvey and she was greeted by her husband, Hon. John Kollander, Register of Deeds of Greeley County, with a handsome new home in Elm Street."

Then under it is this note:

"Of all the women of the Elyria settlers, Rhoda Kollander would not come with us and face the hardships of pioneer life; but she made John come out, get an office and build her a cabin before she would come. Rhoda will not be happy as an angel unless they have rocking chairs in Heaven."

and cruel as the older world was around them in those days.

Amos and Mary took up their homestead just south of the town on the Wahoo, and started the *Tribune,* and Mary hoped the high hopes of the Irish while Amos wrote his part of the news, set his share of the type, ran the errands for the advertising and bragged of the town in their editorial columns with all the faith of an Irishman by marriage.

What a fairy story the history of Harvey would be if it should be written only as it was. For one could even begin it once upon a time. Once upon a time, let us say, there was a land of sunshine and prairie grass. And then great genii came and set in little white houses and new unpainted barns, thumbed in faint green hedgerows and board fences, that checkered in the fields lying green or brown or loam black by the sluggish streams that gouged broad, zigzag furrows in the land. And upon a hill that overlooked a rock-bottomed stream the genii, the spirit of the time, sat a town. It glistened in the sunshine and when the town was over a year old, it was so newly set in, that its great stone schoolhouse all towered and tin-corniced, beyond the scattered outlying residences, rose in the high, untrodden grass. The people of Harvey were vastly proud of that schoolhouse. The young editor and his wife used to gaze at it adoringly as they drove to and from the office morning and evening; and they gilded the town with high hopes. For then they were in their twenties. The population of Harvey for the most part those first years was in its twenties also, when gilding is cheap. But thank Heaven the gilding of our twenties is lasting.

It was into this gilded world that Grant Adams was born. Suckled behind the press, cradled in the waste basket, toddling under hurrying feet, Grant's earliest memories were of work—work and working lovers, and their gay talk as they worked wove strange fancies in his little mind.

It was in those days that Amos Adams and his wife, considering the mystery of death, tried to peer behind the veil. For Amos tables tipped, slates wrote, philosophers, statesmen and conquerors flocked in with grotesque advice, and all those curious phenomena that come from the activities of the abnormal mind, appeared and astounded the visionaries

as they went about their daily work. The boy Grant used to sit, a wide-eyed, freckled, sun-browned little creature, running his skinny little hands through his red hair, and wondering about the unsolvable problems of life and death.

But soon the problems of a material world came in upon Grant as the child became a boy: problems of the wood and field, problems of the constantly growing herd at play in water, in snow, on the ice and in the prairie; and then came the more serious problems of the wood box, the stable and farm. Thus he grew strong of limb, quick of hand, firm of foot and sure of mind. And someway as he grew from childhood into boyhood, getting hold of his faculties—finding himself physically, so Harvey seemed to grow with him. All over the town where men needed money Daniel Sands's mortgages were fastened—not heavily (nothing was heavy in that day of the town's glorious youth) but surely. Dr. Nesbit's gay ruthless politics, John Kollander's patriotism, leading always to the court house and its emoluments, Captain Morton's inventions that never materialized, the ever coming sunrise of the Adams—all these things became definitely a part of the changeless universe of Harvey as Grant's growing faculties became part of his consciousness.

And here is a mystery: the formation of the social crystal. In that crystal the outer facets and the inner fell into shape —the Nesbits, the Kollanders, the Adamses, the Calvins, the Mortons, and the Sandses, falling into one group; and the Williamses, the Hogans, the Bowmans, the McPhersons, the Dooleys and Casper Herdicker falling into another group. The hill separated from the valley. The separation was not a matter of moral sense; for John Kollander and Dan Sands and Joseph Calvin touched zero in moral intelligence; and it could not have been business sense, for Captain Morton for all his dreams was a child with a dollar, and Dr. Nesbit never was out of debt a day in his life; without his salary from tax-payers John Kollander would have been a charge on the county. In the matter of industry Daniel Sands was a marvel, but Jamie McPherson toiling all day used to come home and start up his well drill and its clatter could be heard far into the night, and often he started it hours before dawn. Nor could aspirations and visions have furnished

the line of cleavage; for no one could have hopes so high for Harvey as Jamie, who sank his drill far into the earth, put his whole life, every penny of his earnings and all his strength into the dream that some day he would bring coal or oil or gas to Harvey and make it a great city. Yet when he found the precious vein, thick and rich and easy to mine, Daniel Sands and Joseph Calvin took his claim from him by chicanery as easily as they would have robbed a blind man of a penny, and Jamie went to work in the mines for Daniel Sands grumbling but faithful. Williams and Dooley and Hogan and Herdicker bent at their daily tasks in those first years, each feeling that the next day or the next month or at most the next year his everlasting fortune would be made. And Dick Bowman, cohort of Dr. Nesbit, many a time and oft would wash up, put on a clean suit, and go out and round up the voters in the Valley for the Doctor's cause and scorn his task with a hissing; for Dick read Karl Marx and dreamed of the day of the revolution. Yet he dwelled with the sons of Essua, who as they toiled murmured about their stolen birthright. When a decade had passed in Harvey the social crystal was firm; the hill and the valley were cast into the solid rock of things as they are. No one could say why; it was a mystery. It is still a mystery. As society forms and reforms, its cleavages follow unknown lines.

It was on a day in June—late in the morning, after Grant and Nathan Perry—son of the stuttering Kyle of that name, had come from a cool hour in the quiet pool down on the Wahoo and little Grant, waiting like a hungry pup for his lunch, that was tempting him in the basket under the typerack, was counting the moments and vaguely speculating as to what minutes were—when he looked up from the floor and saw what seemed to him a visitor from another world.[1]

[1] Let us read Mary Adams's clipping and note on the arrival of young Thomas Van Dorn in Harvey. The clipping which is from the local page of the paper reads:

"Thomas Van Dorn, son of the late General Nicholas Van Dorn of Schenectady, New York, has located in Harvey for the practice of law and his advertising card appears elsewhere. Mr. Van Dorn is a Yale man and a law graduate of that school as well as an alumnus of the college. As a youth with his father young Thomas stopped in Harvey the day the town was founded. He was a member of the

The creature was talking to Amos Adams sitting at the desk; and Amos was more or less impressed with the visitor's splendor. He wore exceedingly tight trousers—checked trousers, and a coat cut grandly and extravagantly in its fullness, a high wing collar, and a soup dish hat. He was such a figure as the comic papers of the day were featuring as the exquisite young man of the period.

Youth was in his countenance and lighted his black eyes. His oval, finely featured face, his blemishless olive skin, his strong jaw and his high, beautiful forehead, over which a black wing of hair hung carelessly, gave him a distinction that brought even the child's eyes to him. He was smiling pleasantly as he said,

"I'm Thomas Van Dorn—Mr. Adams, I believe?" he asked, and added as he fastened his fresh young eyes upon the editor's, "you scarcely will remember me—but you doubtless remember the day when father's hunting party passed through town? Well—I've come to grow up with the country."

The editor rose, roughed his short, sandy beard and greeted the youth pleasantly. "Mr. Daniel Sands sent me

hunting party organized by Wild Bill which under General Van Dorn's patronage escorted the Russian Grand Duke Alexis over this part of the state after buffalo and wild game. Mr. Thomas Van Dorn remembers the visit well, and old settlers will recall the fact that Daniel Sands that day sold for $100 in gold to the General the plot now known as Van Dorn's addition to Harvey. Mr. Thomas Van Dorn still has the deed to the plot and will soon put the lots on the market. He was a pleasant caller at the *Tribune* office this week. Come again, say we."

And upon a paper whereon the clipping is pasted is this in Mary Adams's hand:

"The famous Van Dorn baby! How the years have flown since the scandal of his mother's elopement and his father's duel with Sir Charles shook two continents. What an old rake the General was. And the boy's mother after two other marriages and a sad period on the variety stage died alone in penury! And Amos says that the General was so insolent to his men in the war, that he dared not go into action with them for fear they would shoot him in the back. Yet the boy is as lovely and gentle a creature as one could ask to meet. This is as it should be."

to you, Mr. Adams—to print a professional card in your paper," said the young man. He pronounced them "cahd" and "papuh" and smiled brightly as his quick eyes told him that the editor was conscious of his eastern accent. While they were talking business, locating the position of the card in the newspaper, the editor noticed that the young man's eyes kept wandering to Mary Adams, typesetting across the room. She was a comely woman just in her thirties and Amos Adams finally introduced her. When he went out the Adamses talked him over and agreed that he was an addition to the town.

Within a month he had formed a partnership with Joseph Calvin, the town's eldest lawyer; and young Henry Fenn, who had been trying for a year to buy a partnership with Calvin, was left to go it alone. So Henry Fenn contented himself with forming a social partnership with his young rival. And when the respectable Joseph Calvin was at home or considering the affairs of the Methodist Sunday School of which he was superintendent, young Mr. Fenn and young Mr. Van Dorn were rambling at large over the town and the adjacent prairie, seeking such diversion as young men in their exceedingly early twenties delight in: Mr. Riley's saloon, the waters of the Wahoo, by moonlight, the melliferous strains of "Larboard watch," the shot gun, the quail and the prairie chicken, the quarterhorse, and the jackpot, the cocktail, the Indian pony, the election, the footrace, the baseball team, the Sunday School picnic, the Fourth of July celebration, the dining room girls at the Palace Hotel, the cross country circus and the trial of the occasional line fence murder case—all were divertissements that engaged their passing young attention.

If ever the world was an oyster for a youth the world of Harvey and the fullness thereof was an oyster to Thomas Van Dorn. He had all that the crude western community cherished: the prestige of money, family, education, and that indefinable grace and courtesy of body and soul that we call charm. And Harvey people seemed to be made for him. He liked their candor, their strength, their crass materialism, their bray and bluster, their vain protests of democracy and their unconscious regard for his caste and cul-

ture. So whatever there was of egoism in his nature grew unchecked by Harvey. He was the young lord of the manor. However Harvey might hoot at his hat and gibe at his elided R's and mock his rather elaborate manners behind his back; nevertheless he had his way with the town and he knew that he was the master. While those about him worked and worried Tom Van Dorn had but to rub lightly his lamp and the slave appeared and served him. Naturally a young man of his conspicuous talents in his exceedingly early twenties who has the vast misfortune to have a lamp of Aladdin to rub, asks genii first of all for girls and girls and more girls. Then incidentally he asks for business and perhaps for politics and may be as an afterthought and for his own comfort he may pray for the good will of his fellows. Tom Van Dorn became known in the vernacular as a "ladies man." It did not hurt his reputation as a lawyer, for he was young and youth is supposed to have its follies so long as its follies are mere follies. No one in that day hinted that Tom Van Dorn was anything more dangerous than a butterfly. So he flitted from girl to girl, from love affair to love affair, from heart to heart in his gay clothes with his gay manners and his merry face. And men smiled and women and girls whispered and boys hooted and all the world gave the young lord his way. But when he included the dining room girls at the Palace Hotel in his list of conquests, Dr. Nesbit began squinting seriously at the youth and, late at night coming from his professional visits, when the doctor passed the young fellow returning from some humble home down near the river, the Doctor would pipe out in the night, "Tut, tut, Tom—this is no place for you."

But the Doctor was too busy with his own affairs to assume the guardianship of Tom Van Dorn. As Mayor of Harvey the Doctor made the young man city attorney, thereby binding the youth to the Mayor in the feudal system of politics and attaching all the prestige and charm and talent of the boy to the Doctor's organization.

For Dr. Nesbit in his blithe and cock-sure youth was born to politics as the sparks fly upward. Men looked to him for leadership and he blandly demanded that they follow him. He was every man's friend. He knew the whole

county by its first name. The men, the women, the children, the dogs, the horses knew him and he knew and loved them all. But in return for his affection he expected loyalty. He was a jealous leader who divided no honors. Seven months in the year he wore white linen clothes and his white clad figure bustling through a crowd on Market Street on Saturday or elbowing its way through a throng at any formal gathering, or jogging through the night behind his sorrel mare or moving like a pink-faced cupid, turned Nemesis in a county convention, made him a marked man in the community. But what was more important, his distinction had a certain cheeriness about it. And his cheeriness was vocalized in a high, piping, falsetto voice, generally gay and nearly always soft and kindly. It expressed a kind of incarnate good nature that disarmed enmity and drew men to him instinctively. And underneath his amicability was iron. Hence men came to him in trouble and he healed their ills, cured their souls, went on their notes and took their hearts for his own, which carried their votes for his uses. So he became calif of Harvey.

Even deaf John Kollander who had political aspirations of a high order learned early that his road to glory led through obedience to the Doctor. So John went about the county demanding that the men who had saved the union should govern it and declaring that the flag of his country should not be trailed in the dust by vandal hands—meaning of course by "vandal hands" the opposition candidate for register of deeds or county clerk or for whatever county office John was asking at that election; and at the convention John's old army friends voted for the Doctor's slate and in the election they supported the Doctor's ticket. But tall, deaf John Kollander in his blue army clothes with their brass buttons and his campaign hat, always cut loose from Dr. Nesbit's paternal care after every election. For the Doctor, after he had tucked John away in a county office, asked only to appoint John's deputies and that Mrs. Kollander keep out of the Doctor's office and away from his house.

"I have no objections," the Doctor would chirrup at the ample, good-natured Rhoda Kollander who would haunt him during John's periods of political molting, pretending

to advise with the Doctor on her husband's political status, "to your society from May until November every two years, Rhody, but that's enough. Now go home! Go home, woman," he commanded, "and look after your growing family."

And Rhoda Kollander would laugh amiably in telling it and say, "Now I suppose some women would get mad, but law, I know Doc Jim! He doesn't mean a thing!" Whereupon she would settle down where she was stopping until meal time and reluctantly remain to eat. As she settled comfortably at the table she would laugh easily and exclaim: "Now isn't it funny! I don't know what John and the boys will have. There isn't a thing in the house. But, law, I suppose they can get along without me once in a lifetime." Then she would laugh and eat heartily and sit around until the crisis at home had passed.

But the neighbors knew that John Kollander was opening a can of something, gathering the boys around him and as they ate, recounting the hardships of army life to add spice to an otherwise stale and unprofitable meal. Afterward probably he would go to some gathering of his comrades and there fight, bleed and die for his country. For he was an incorrigible patriot. The old flag, his country's honor, and the preservation of the union were themes that never tired him. He organized his fellow veterans in the town and county and helped to organize them in the state and was forever going to other towns to attend camp fires and rallies and bean dinners and reunions where he spoke with zeal and some eloquence about the danger of turning the country over to the southern brigadiers. He had a set speech which was greatly admired at the rallies and in this speech it was his wont to reach for one of the many flags that always adorned the platform on such occasions, tear it from its hanging and wrapping it proudly about his gaunt figure, recite a dialogue between himself and the angel Gabriel, the burden of which was that so long as John Kollander had that flag about him at the resurrection, no question would be asked at Heaven's gate of one of its defenders. Now the fact was that John Kollander was sent to the war of the rebellion a few weeks before the surrender of Lee at Appomattox, as

Daniel Sands's paid substitute and his deafness was caused by firing an anvil at the peace jubilee in Cincinnati, the powder on the anvil being the only powder John Kollander ever had smelled. But his descriptions of battle and the hardships and horrors of war were none the less vivid and harrowing because he had never crossed the Ohio.

Those were the days when the *Tribune* was at its zenith—the days when Jared Thurston was employed as its foreman and Lizzie Coulter, pretty, blue-eyed, fair-haired Lizzie Coulter helped Mary Adams to set the type. It was not a long Day of Triumph, but while it lasted Mary and Amos made the most of it and spoke in a grand way about "the office force." They even had vague notions of starting a daily and many a night Jared and Amos pored over the type samples in the advertising in Rounds Printer's Cabinet, picked out the type they would need and the other equipment necessary for the new venture. But it was only a dream. For gradually Jared found Lizzie's eyes and he found more to interest him there than in the type-book, and so the dream faded and was gone.

Also as Lizzie's eyes began to glow in his sky, Jared let his interest lag in the talk at Casper Herdicker's shoe shop, though it was tall talk, and Jared sitting on a keg in a corner with little Tom Williams, the stone mason, beside him on a box, and Denny Hogan near him on a vacant work bench and Ira Dooley on the window ledge would wrangle until bed time many a night as Dick Bowman, wagging a warlike head, and Casper pegging away at his shoes, tore society into shreds, smashed idols and overturned civilization. Up to this point there was complete agreement between the iconoclasts. They went so far together that they had no quarrel about the route of the mob down Fifth Avenue in New York—which Dick knew only as a legend but which Casper had seen; and they were one in the belief that Dan Sands's bank and Wright & Perry's store should fall early in the sack of Market Street. But when it came to reconstructing society there was a clash that mounted to a cataclysm. For Dick, shaking his head violently, demanded a government that should regulate everything and Casper waving a vicious, flat-nosed hammer, battered down all gov-

ernment and stood for the untrammeled and unhampered liberty of the individual. Night after night they looted civilization and stained the sky with their fires and the ground with the oppressor's blood, only to sink their claws and tusks into each other's vitals in mortal combat over the spoil.

About the time that Jared Thurston found the new stars that had ranged across his ken, Tom Van Dorn, the handsome, cheerful, exquisite Tom Van Dorn began to find the debates between Casper and Dick Bowman diverting. So many a night when the society of the softer sex was either cloying or inconvenient, the dapper young fellow would come dragging Henry Fenn with him, to sit on a rickety chair and observe the progress of the revolution and to enjoy the carnage that always followed the downfall of the established order. He used to sit beside Jared Thurston who, being a printer, was supposed to belong to the more intellectual of the crafts and hence more appreciative than Williams or Dooley or Hogan, of his young lordship's point of view; and as the debate waxed warm, Tom was wont to pinch the lean leg of Mr. Thurston in lieu of the winks Tom dared not venture. But a time came when Jared Thurston sat apart from Van Dorn and stared coldly at him. And as Tom and Henry Fenn walked out of the human slaughter house that Dick and Casper had made after a particularly bloody revolt against the capitalistic system, Henry Fenn walked for a time beside his friend looking silently at the earth while Van Dorn mooned and star-gazed with wordy delight. Henry lifted his face, looked at Tom with great, bright, sympathetic eyes and cut in:

"Tom—why are you playing with Lizzie Coulter? She is not in your class or of your kind. What's your idea in cutting in between Jared and her; you'll only make trouble."

A smile, a gay, happy, and withal a seductive smile lit up the handsome, oval face of young Mr. Van Dorn. The smile became a laugh, a quiet, insinuating, good-natured, light-hearted laugh. As he laughed he replied:

"Lizzie's all right, Henry—don't worry about Lizzie." Again he laughed a gentle, deep-voiced chuckle, and held

up his hand in the moonlight. A brown scab was lined across the back of the hand and as Henry saw it Van Dorn spoke: "Present from Lizzie—little pussy." Again he chuckled and added, "Nearly made the horse run away, too. Anyway," he laughed pleasantly, "when I left her she promised to go again."

But Henry Fenn returned to his point: "Tom," he cried, "don't play with Lizzie—she's not your kind, and it's breaking Jared's heart. Can't you see what you're doing? You'll go down there a dozen times, make love to her, hold her hand and kiss her and go away and pick up another girl. But she's the whole world and Heaven to boot for Jared. She's his one little ewe lamb, Tom. And she'd be happy with Jared if—"

"If she wants Jared she can have him. I'm not holding her," interrupted the youth. "And anyway," he exclaimed, "what do I owe to Jared and what do I owe to her or to any one but myself!"

Fenn did not answer at once. At length he broke the silence. "Well, you heard what I said and I didn't smile when I said it."

But Tom Van Dorn did smile as he answered, a smile of such sweetness, and of such winning grace that it sugar-coated his words.

"Henry," he cried in his gay, deep voice with the exuberance of youth ringing in it, "the world is mine. You know what I think about this whole business. If Lizzie doesn't want me to bother her she mustn't have such eyes and such hair and such lips. In this life I shall take what I find that I can get. I'm not going to be meek nor humble nor patient, nor forgiving and forbearing and I'm not going to refrain from a mutton roast because some one has a ewe lamb."

He put a warm, kind, brotherly hand on the shoulder beside him. "Shocked, aren't you, Henry?" he asked, laughing.

Henry Fenn looked up with a gentle, glowing smile on his rather dull face and returned, "No, Tom. Maybe you can make it go, but I couldn't."

"Well, I can. Watch me," he cried arrogantly. "Henry, I want the advantage of my strength in this world and I'm

not going to go puling around, golden-ruling and bending my back to give the weak and worthless a ride. Let 'em walk. Let 'em fall. Let 'em rot for all I care. I'm not afraid of their God. There is no God. There is nature. Up to the place where man puts on trousers it's a battle of thews and teeth. And nature never intended pants to mark the line where she changes the order of things. And the servile, weakling, groveling, charitable, cowardly philosophy of Christ—it doesn't fool me, Henry. I'm a pagan and I want the advantage of all the force, all the power, that nature gave me, to live life as a dangerous, exhilarating experience. I shall live life to the full—live it hard—live it beautifully, but live it! live it! Henry, live it like a gentleman and not like an understrapper and bootlicker! I intend to command, not obey! Rule, not serve! I shall take and not give—not give save as it pleases me to have my hand licked now and then! As for Lizzie and Jared," young Mr. Van Dorn waved a gay hand, "let them look out for themselves. They're not my worries!"

"But, Tom," remonstrated Henry as he looked at the ground, "it's nothing to me of course, but Lizzie—"

"Ah, Henry," Van Dorn laughed gayly, "I'm not going to hurt Lizzie. She's good fun: that's all. And now look here, Mr. Preacher—you come moralizing around me about what I'm doing to some one else, which after all is not my business but hers; and I'm right here to tell you, what you're doing to yourself, and that's your business and no one's else. You're drinking too much. People are talking about it. Quit it! Whisky never won a jury. In the Morse case you loaded up for your speech and I beat you because in all your agonizing about the wrong to old man Müller and his 'pretty brown-eyed daughter' as you called her, you forgot slick and clean the flaw in Morse's deed."

"I suppose you're right, Tom. But I was feeling kind of off that day, mother'd been sick the night before and—"

"And so you filled up with a lot of bad whisky and drivveled and wept and stumbled through the case and I beat you. I tell you, Henry, I keep myself fit. I have no time to look after others. My job is myself and you'll find that unless you look after yourself no one else will, at least whisky won't. If

I find girling is beating me in my law cases I quit girling. But it doesn't. Lord, man, the more I know of human nature, the more I pick over the souls of these country girls and blow open the petals of their pretty hearts, the wiser I am."

"But the girls, Tom—the girls—" protested the somber-eyed Mr. Fenn.

"Ah, I don't hurt 'em and they like it. And so long as your whisky hamestrings you and my girls give me what I need in my business—don't talk to me."

Tom Van Dorn left Fenn at his mother's door and as Fenn saw his friend turn toward the south he called, "Aren't you going to your room?"

"Why, it's only eleven o'clock," answered Van Dorn. To the inquiring silence Van Dorn called, "I'm going down to see Lizzie."

Henry Fenn stood looking at his friend, who explained: "That's all right. I said I'd be down to-night and she'll wait."

"Well—" said Fenn. But Van Dorn cut him short with "Now, Henry, I can take care of myself. Lizzie can take care of herself—and you're the only one of us who, as I see it, needs careful nursing!" And with that he went striding away.

And three hours later when the moon was waning in the west a girl sitting by her window gazed at the red orb and dreamed beautiful dreams, such as a girl may dream but once, of the prince who had come to her so gloriously. While the prince strolled up the street with his coat over his arm, his hat in his hand, letting the night wind flutter the raven's wing of hair on his brow, and as he went he laughed to himself softly and laughed and laughed. For are we not told of old to put not our trust in princes!

CHAPTER III

IN WHICH WE CONSIDER THE LADIES—GOD BLESS 'EM!

DURING those years in the late seventies and the early eighties, the genii on the Harvey job grunted and grumbled as they worked, for the hours were long and tedious and the material was difficult to handle. Kyle Perry's wife died, and it was all the genii could do to find him a cook who would stay with him and his lank, slab-sided son, and when the genii did produce a cook—the famous Katrina, they wished her on Kyle and the boy for life, and she ruled them with an iron rod. And to even things up, they let Kyle stutter himself into a partnership with Ahab Wright—though Kyle was trying to tell Ahab that they should have a partition in their stable. But partition was too much of a mouthful and poor Kyle fell to stuttering on it and found himself sold into bondage for life by the genii, dispensing nails and cod-fish and calico as Ahab's partner, before Kyle could get rid of the word partition.

The genii also had to break poor Casper Herdicker's heart—and he had one, and a big one, despite his desire for blood and plunder; and they broke it when his wife Brunhilde deserted the hearthstone back of the shoe-shop, rented a vacant store room on Market Street and went into the millinery way of life. And it wasn't enough that the tired genii had to gouge out the streets of Harvey; to fill in the gulleys and ravines; to dab in scores of new houses; to toil and moil over the new hotel, witching up four bleak stories upon the prairie. It wasn't enough that they had to cast a spell on people all over the earth, dragging strangers to Harvey by trainloads; it wasn't enough that the overworked genii should have to bring big George Brotherton to town with the railroad—and he was load enough for any engine; his heart itself weighed ten stone; it wasn't enough that they

had to find various and innumerable contraptions for Captain Morton to peddle, but there was Tom Van Dorn's new black silk mustache to grow, and to be oiled and curled daily; so he had to go to the Palace Hotel barber shop at least once every day, and passing the cigar counter, he had to pass by Violet Mauling—pretty, empty-faced, doll-eyed Violet Mauling at the cigar stand. And all the long night and all the long day, the genii, working on the Harvey job, cast spells, put on charms, and did their deepest sorcery to take off the power of the magic runes that young Tom's black art were putting upon her; and day after day the genii felt their highest potencies fail. So no wonder they mumbled and grumbled as they bent over their chores. For a time, the genii had tried to work on Tom Van Dorn's heart after he dropped Lizzie Coulter and sent her away on a weary life pilgrimage with Jared Thurston, as the wife of an itinerant editor; but they found nothing to work on under Tom's cigar holder—that is, nothing in the way of a heart. There was only a kind of public policy. So the genii made the public policy as broad and generous as they could and let it go at that.

Tom Van Dorn and Henry Fenn rioted in their twenties. John Kollander saved a bleeding country, pervaded the courthouse and did the housework at home while Rhoda, his wife, who couldn't cook hard boiled eggs, organized the French Cooking Club. Captain Ezra Morton spent his mental energy upon the invention of a self-heating molasses spigot, which he hoped would revolutionize the grocery business while his physical energy was devoted to introducing a burglar proof window fastener into the proud homes that were dotting the tall grass environs of Harvey. Amos Adams was hearing rappings and holding high communion with great spirits in the vasty deep. Daniel Sands, having buried his second wife, was making eyes at a third and spinning his financial web over the town. Dr. and Mrs. Nesbit were marvelling at the mystery of a child's soul, a maiden's soul, reaching out tendril after tendril as the days made years. The Dick Bowmans were holding biennial receptions to the little angels who came to the house in the Doctor's valise—and welcomed, hilariously welcomed babies they were

—welcomed with cigars and free drinks at Riley's saloon by Dick, and in awed silence by Lida, his wife—welcomed even though the parents never knew exactly how the celestial guests were to be robed and harped; while the Joe Calvins of proud Elm Street, opulent in an eight room house, with the town's one bath tub, scowled at the angels who kept on coming nevertheless—for such is the careless and often captious way of angels that come to the world in the doctor's black bag—kept on coming to the frowning house of Calvin as frequently and as idly as they came to the gay Bowmans. Looking back on those days a generation later, it would seem as if the whole town were a wilderness of babies. They came on the hill in Elm Street, a star-eyed baby named Ann even came to the Daniel Sandses, and a third baby to the Ezra Mortons and another to the Kollanders (which gave Rhoda an excuse for forming a lifelong habit of making John serve her breakfast in bed to the scorn of Mrs. Nesbit and Mrs. Herdicker who for thirty years sniffed audibly about Rhoda's amiable laziness) and the John Dexters had one that came and went in the night. But down by the river—there they came in flocks. The Dooleys, the McPhersons, the Williamses and the hordes of unidentified men and women who came to saw boards, mix mortar, make bricks and dig—to them the kingdom of Heaven was very near, for they suffered little children and forbade them not. And also, because the kingdom was so near—so near even to homes without sewers, homes where dirt and cold and often hunger came—the children were prone to hurry back to the Kingdom discouraged with their little earthly pilgrimages. For those who had dragged chains and hewed wood and drawn water in the town's first days seemed by some specific gravity of the social system to be holding their places at those lower levels—always reaching vainly and eagerly, but always reaching a little higher and a little further from them for that equality of opportunity which seemed to lie about them that first day when the town was born.

In the upper reaches of the town Henry Fenn's bibulous habits became accepted matters to a wider and wider circle and Tom Van Dorn still had his way with the girls while the town grinned at the two young men in gay reproval.

But Amos Adams through his familiar spirits got solemn, cryptic messages for the young men—from Tom's mother and Henry's father. Amos assented, but never agreed, used to deliver these messages with mordacial admonitions of his own—kind, gentle and gorgonzoly meffective. Then he would return to his office with a serene sense of a duty well done, and meet and feast upon the eyes of Mary, his wife, keen, hungry eyes, filled with more or less sinful pride in his strength.

No defeat that ever came to Amos Adams, and because he was born out of his time, defeat was his common portion, and no contumely ever was his in a time when men scorned the evidence of things not seen, no failure, no apparent weakness in her husband's nature, ever put a tremor in her faith in him. For she knew his heart. She could hear his armor clank and see it shine: she could feel the force and the precision of his blade when all the world of Harvey saw only a dreamer in rusty clothes, fumbling with some stupid and ponderous folly that the world did not understand. The printing office that Mary and Amos thought so grand was really a little pine shack, set on wooden piers on a side street. Inside in the single room, with the rough-coated walls above the press and type-cases covered with inky old sale bills, and specimens of the *Tribune's* printing—inside the office which seemed to Mary and Amos the palace of a race of giants, others saw only a shabby, inky, little room, with an old fashioned press and a jobber among the type racks in the gloom to the rear. Through the front window that looked into a street filled with loads of hay and wood, and with broken wagons, and scrap iron from a wheelwright's shop, Amos Adams looked for the everlasting sunrise, and Mary saw it always in his face.

But this is idling: it is not getting on with the Book. A score of men and women are crowding up to these pages waiting to get into the story. And the town of Harvey, how it is bursting its bounds, how it is sprawling out over the white paper, tumbling its new stores and houses and gas mains and water pipes all over the table: with what a clatter and clamor and with what vain pride! Now the pride of those years in Harvey came with the railroad, and here,

pulling at the paper, stands big George Brotherton with his ten stone heart. He has been sputtering and nagging for a dozen pages to swing off the front platform of the first passenger car that came to town. He was a fat, overgrown youth in his late teens, but he wore the uniform of a train newsboy, and any uniform is a uniform. His laugh was like the crash of worlds—and it is to-day after thirty years. When the road pushed on westward Brotherton remained in Harvey and even though the railroad roundhouse employed five hundred men and even though the town's population doubled and then trebled, still George Brotherton was better than everything else that the railroad brought. He found work in a pool and billiard hall; but that was a pent-up Utica for him and his contracted powers sent him to Daniel Sands for a loan of twenty-five dollars. The unruffled exterior, the calm impudence with which the boy waived aside the banker's request for a second name on George's note, and the boy's obvious eagerness to be selling something, secured the money and established him in a cigar store and news stand. Within a year the store became a social center that rivaled Riley's saloon and being near the midst of things in business, attracted people of a different sort from those who frequented Casper Herdicker's debating school in the shoe shop. To the cigar stand by day came Dr. Nesbit with his festive but guileful politics, Joe Calvin, Amos Adams, stuttering Kyle Perry, deaf John Kollander, occasionally Dick Bowman, Ahab Wright in his white necktie and formal garden whiskers, Rev. John Dexter and Captain Morton; while by night the little store was a forum for young Mortimer Sands, for Tom Van Dorn, for Henry Fenn, for the clerks of Market Street and for such gay young blades as were either unmarried or being married were brave enough to break the apron string. For thirty years, nearly a generation, they have been meeting there night after night and on rainy days, taking the world apart and putting it together again to suit themselves. And though strangers have come into the council at Brotherton's, Captain Morton remains dean. And though the Captain does not know it, being corroded with pride, there still clings about the place a tradition of the day

when Captain Morton rode his high wheeled bicycle, the first the town ever had seen, in the procession to his wife's funeral. They say it was the Captain's serene conviction that his agency for the bicycle—exclusive for five counties—would make him rich, and that it was no lack of love and respect for his wife but rather an artist's pride in his work as the distributor of a long-felt want which perched Ezra Morton on that high wheel in the funeral procession. For Mary Adams who knew, who was with the stricken family when death came, who was in the lonely house when the family came home from the cemetery, says that Ezra's grief was real. Surely thirty years of singlehearted devotion to the three motherless girls should prove his love.

Those were gala days for Captain Morton; the whole universe was flowering in his mind in schemes and plans and devices which he hoped to harness for his power and glory. And the forensic group at Mr. Brotherton's had much first hand information from the Captain as to the nature of his proposed activities and his prospective conquests. And while the Captain in his prime was surveying the world that was about to come under his domain the house of Adams, little and bleak and poor, down near the Wahoo on the homestead which the Adamses had taken in the sixties became in spite of itself, a gay and festive habitation. Childhood always should make a home bright and there came a time when the little house by the creek fairly blossomed with young faces. The children of the Kollanders, the Perrys, the Calvins, the Nesbits, and the Bowmans—girls and boys were everywhere and they knew all times and seasons. But the red poll and freckled face of Grant Adams was the center of this posy bed of youth.

Grant was a shrill-voiced boy, impulsive and passionately generous and all but obsessed with a desire to protect the weak. Whether it was bug, worm or dog, or hunted animal or bullied child or drunken man, fly-swarmed and bedeviled of boys in the alley, or a little girl teased by her playmates, Grant—fighting mad, came rushing in to do battle for the victim. Yet he was no anemic child of ragged nerves. His fist went straight when he fought, and landed with force. His eyes saw accurately and his voice carried terror in it.

He was a vivid youth, and without him the place down by the river would have been bleak and dreary. But because Grant was in the world, the rusty old phaëton in which Amos and Mary rode daily from the farm to their work, gradually bedecked itself with budding childhood blooming into youth, and it was no longer drab and dusty, but a veritable chariot of life. When Grant was a sturdy boy of eight, little Jasper Adams came into this big bewildering world. And after Grant and his gardenful of youth were gone, Jasper's garden followed. And there was a short season when the two gardens were growing together. It was in that season while Grant was just coming into shoeblacking and paper collars, that in some indefinite way, Laura Nesbit, daughter of the Doctor and Bedelia Satterthwaite, his blue blooded Maryland wife, separated herself from the general beauty of the universe and for Grant, Laura became a particular person. In Mary Adams's note book she writes with maternal pride of his fancy for Laura: "It is the only time in Grant's life when he has looked up instead of down for something to love." And the mother sets down a communication from Socrates through the planchette to Amos, declaring that "Love is a sphere center"—a message which doubtless the fond parents worked into tremendous import for their child. Though a communication from some anonymous sage called the Peach Blow Philosopher, who began haunting Amos as a familiar spirit about this time recorded the oracle, also carefully preserved by Mary in her book among the prophecies for Grant that, "Carrots, while less fragrant than roses, are better for the blood." And while the cosmic forces were wrestling with these problems for Grant and Laura, the children were tripping down their early teens all innocent of the uproar they were making among the sages and statesmen and conquerors who flocked about the planchette board for Amos every night. For Laura, Grant carved tiny baskets from peach-pits and coffee beans; for her he saved red apples and candy globes that held in their precious insides gorgeous pictures; for her he combed his hair and washed his neck; for her he scribbled verses wherein eyes met skies, and arts met hearts, and beams met dreams and loves the doves.

The joy of first love that comes in early youth—and always it does come then, though it is not always confessed—is a gawky and somewhat guilty joy that spends itself in sighs and blushes and Heaven knows what of self-discovery. Thus Grant in Laura's autograph album after all his versifying on the kitchen table could only write "Truly Yours" and leave her to define the deep significance of the phrase so obviously inverted. And she in his autograph album could only trust herself—though naturally being female she was bolder—to the placid depths of "As ever your friend." Though in lean, hungry-eyed Nathan Perry's book she burst into glowing words of deathless remembrance and Grant wrote in Emma Morton's album fervid stanzas wherein "you" rimed with "the wandering Jew" and "me" with "eternity." At school where the subtle wisdom of childhood reads many things not writ in books, the names of Grant and Laura were linked together, in the innocent gossip of that world.

They say that modern thought deems these youthful experiences dangerous and superfluous; and so probably they will end, and the joy of this earliest mating season will be bottled up and stored for a later maturity. God is wise and good. Doubtless some new and better thing will take the place of this first moving of the waters of life in the heart; but for us of the older generation that is beginning to fade, we are glad that untaught and innocent, our lips tasted from that spring when in the heart was no knowledge of the poison that might come with the draft.

A tall, shy, vivid girl, but above everything else, friendly, was Laura Nesbit in her middle teens; and though Grant in later years remembered her as having wonderful gray eyes, the elder town of Harvey for the most part recollects her only as a gay and kindly spirit looking out into the world through a happy, inquiring face. But the elder town could not in the nature of things know Laura Nesbit as the children knew her. For the democracy of childhood has its own estimates of its own citizens and the children of Harvey—the Dooleys and the Williamses and the Bowmans as well as the Calvins, the Mortons, the Sandses and the Kollanders, remember Laura Nesbit for something more than her rather gawky body. To the children, she was a bright soul. They

remember—and the Bowmans better than any one else—that Laura Nesbit shared what she had with every one. She never ate a whole stick of candy in her life. From her school lunch-basket, the Dooleys had their first oranges and the Williamses their first bananas. Apples for the Bowmans and maple sugar—a rare delicacy on the prairies in those days—for every one came from her wonderful basket. And though her mother kept Laura in white aprons when the other girls were in ginghams and in little red and black woolen, though the child's wonderful yellow hair, soft and wavy like her father's plumey roach, was curled with great care and much pride, it was her mother's pride—the grim Satterthwaite demand for caste in any democracy. But even with those caste distinctions there was the face that smiled, the lips that trembled in sympathy, the heart that felt the truth.

"Jim," quoth the mother on a day when the yard was full of Dooleys and Bowmans and Calvins—Calvins, whom Mrs. Nesbit regarded as inferior even to the Dooleys because of the vast Calvin pretense—"Jim, Laura has inherited that common Indiana streak of yours. I can't make her a Satterthwaite—she's Indiana to the bone. Why, when I go to town with her, every drayman and ditch digger and stableman calls to her, and the yard is always full of their tow-headed children. I'll give her up."

And the Doctor gurgled a chuckle and gave her up also.

She always came with her father to the Adamses on Sunday afternoons, and while the Doctor and Amos Adams on the porch went into the matter of the universe as either a phantasm superinduced by the notion of time, or the notion of time as an hallucination of those who believed in space, down by the creek Grant and Laura sitting under the oak near the silent, green pool were feeling their way around the universe, touching shyly and with great abasement the cords that lead from the body to the soul, from material to the spiritual, from dust to God.

It is a queer world, a world that is past finding out. Here are two children, touching souls in the fleetest, lightest way in the world, and the touch welds them together forever. And along come two others, and even as the old song has it,

"after touch of wedded hands," they are strangers yet. No one knows what makes happiness in love. Certainly marriage is no part of it. Certainly it is not first love, for first lovers often quarrel like cats. Certainly it is not separation, for absence, alas, does not make the heart grow fonder; nor is it children—though the good God knows that should help; for they are love incarnate. Certainly it is not respect, for respect is a stale, cold comforter, and love is deeper than respect, and often lives without it—let us whisper the truth in shame. What, then, is this irrational current of the stuff of life, that carries us all in its sway, that brings us to earth, that guides our destiny here—makes so vastly for our happiness or woe, gives us strength or makes us weak, teaches us wisdom or leads us into folly unspeakable, and all unseen, unmeasured and infinitely mysterious?

There was young Tom Van Dorn. Love was a pleasurable emotion, and because it put a joyous fever in his blood, it enhanced his life. But he never defined love; he merely lived on it. Then there was Ahab Wright who regarded love as a kind of sin and when he married the pale, bloodless, shadowy bookkeeper in Wright & Perry's store, he regarded the charivari prepared by Morty Sands and George Brotherton as a shameful rite and tried for an hour to lecture the crowd in his front yard on the evils of unseemly conduct before he gave them an order on the store for a bucket of mixed candy. If Ahab had defined love he would have put cupid in side whiskers and a white necktie and set the fat little god to measuring shingle nails, cod-fish and calico on week days and sitting around in a tail coat and mouse-colored trousers on Sunday, reading the *Christian Evangel* and the *Price Current*. And again there was Daniel Sands who married five women in a long and more or less useful life. He would have defined love as the apotheosis of comfort. Finally there was Henry Fenn to whom love became the compelling force of his being. Love is many things: indeed only this seems sure. Love is the current of our lives, and like minnows we run in schools through it, guided by instinct and by herd suggestions; and some of us are washed ashore; some of us are caught and devoured, and others fare forth in joy and reach the deep.

One rainy day when the conclave in Brotherton's cigar store was weary of discussing the quarrel of Mr. Conklin and Mr. Blaine and the eccentricities of the old German Kaiser, the subject of love came before the house for discussion. Dr. Nesbit, who dropped in incidentally to buy a cigar, but primarily to see George Brotherton about some matters of state in the Third ward, found young Tom Van Dorn stroking his new silky mustache, squinting his eyes and considering himself generally in the attitude of little Jack Horner after the plum episode.

"Speaking broadly," squeaked the Doctor, breaking irritably into the talk, "touching the ladies, God bless 'em—from young Tom's angle, there's nothing to 'em. Broad is the petticoat that leadeth to destruction." The Doctor turned from young Van Dorn, and looked critically at some obvious subject of Van Dorn's remarks as she picked her way across the muddy street, showing something more than a wink of striped stockings, "Tom, there's nothing in it—not a thing in the world."

"Oh,—I don't know," returned the youth, wagging an impudent, though goodnatured head at the Doctor; "what else is there in the world if not in that? The world's full of it—flowers, trees, birds, beasts, men and women—the whole damn universe is afire with it. It's God; there is no other God—just nature building and propagating and perpetuating herself."

"I suppose," squeaked the Doctor with a sigh, as he reached for his morning paper, "that if I had nothing else to do for a living except practice law with Joe Calvin on the side and just be twenty-five years old three hundred days in the year, and no other chores except to help old man Sands rib up his waterworks deal, I would hold some such general views myself. But when I was twenty-five, young man, Bedelia and I were running a race with the meal ticket, and our notions as to the moral government of the universe came hard and were deepset, and we can't change them now."

George Brotherton, Henry Fenn, Captain Morton and Amos Adams came in with a kind of Greek chorus of general agreement with the Doctor. Van Dorn cocked his hat over

his eyes and laughed, and then the Doctor went on in his high falsetto:

"It's all right, Tom; go it while you're young. But that kind of love's young dream generally ends in a nightmare." He hesitated a minute, and then said: "Well, so long as we're all here in the family, I'll tell you about a case I had last night. There's an old fellow—old Dutchman to be exact, down in Spring township; he came here with us when we founded the town; husky old boy, that is, he used to be fifteen years ago. And he had Tom's notion about the ladies, God bless 'em, when he was Tom's age. When I first knew him his notion was causing him trouble, and had settled in one leg, and last night he died of the ladies, God bless 'em."

The Doctor's face flinched with pain, and his treble voice winced as he spoke: "Lord, but he suffered, and to add to his physical torment, he knew that he had to leave his daughter all alone in the world—and without a mother and without a dollar; but that isn't the worst, and he knew it—at the last. This being twenty-five for a living is the hardest job on earth —when you're sixty, and the old man knew that. The girl has missed his blood taint; she's not scarred nor disfigured. It would be better if she were; but he gave her something worse—she's his child!" For a moment the Doctor was silent, then he sighed deeply and shut his eyes as he said: "Boys, for a year and more he's been seeing all that he was, bud like a glorious poison in his daughter."

Van Dorn smiled, and asked casually, "Well, what's her name?" The rest of the group in the store looked down their noses and the Doctor, with his paper under his arm, obviously ignored the question and only stopped in the door to pipe out: "This wasn't the morning to talk to me of the ladies—God bless 'em."

The men in the store watched him as he started across the street, and then saw Laura skip gayly toward him, and the two, holding hands, crossed the muddy street together. She was laughing, and the joy of her soul—a child's soul, shone like a white flame in the dull street and George Brotherton, who saw the pair in the street, roared out: "Well, say—now isn't that something worth looking at? That beats Niagara Falls and Pike's Peak—for me."

Captain Morton looked at the gay pair attentively for a moment and spoke: "And I have three to his one; I tell you, gentlemen—three to his one; and I guess I haven't told you gentlemen about it, but I got the exclusive agency for seven counties for Golden's Patent Self-Opening Fruit Can, an absolute necessity for every household, and in another year my three will be wearing their silks and diamonds!" He smiled proudly around the group and added: "My! that doesn't make any difference. Silk or gingham, I know I've got the best girls on earth—why, if their mother could just see 'em—see how they're unfolding—why, Emma can make every bit as good hash as her mother," a hint of tears stood in his blue eyes. "Why—men, I tell you sometimes I want to die and go right off to Heaven to tell mother all the fine news about 'em—eh?" Deaf John Kollander, with his hand to his less affected ear, nodded approval and said, "That's what I always said, James G. Blaine never was a true friend of the soldier!"

Van Dorn had been looking intently at nothing through the store window. When no one answered Captain Morton, Van Dorn addressed the house rather impersonally:

"Man is the blindest of the mammals. You'd think as smart a man as Dr. Nesbit would see his own vices. Here he is mayor of Harvey, boss of the town. He buys men with Morty's father's money and sells 'em in politics like sheep—not for his own gain; not for his family's gain; but just for the joy of the sport; just as I follow the ladies, God bless 'em; and yet he stands up and reads me a lecture on the wickedness of a little more or less innocent flirting." The young man lighted his cigar at the alcohol flame on the counter. "Morty," he continued, squinting his eyes and stroking his mustache, and looking at the boy with vast vanity, " Morty, do you know what your old dad and yon virtuous Nesbit pasha are doing? Well, I'll tell you something you didn't learn at military school. They're putting up a deal by which we've voted one hundred thousand dollars' worth of city bonds as bonus in aid of a system of city water works and have given them to your dad outright, for putting in a plant that he will own and control; and that he will build for seventy-five thousand dollars." Van Dorn

smiled a placid, malevolent smile at the group and went on: "And the sheik of the village there helped Daniel Sands put it through; helped him buy me as city attorney, with your father's bank's legal business; helped buy Dick Bowman, poor devil with a houseful of children for a hundred dollars for his vote in the council, helped work George here for his vote in the council by lending money to him for his business; and so on down the line. The Doc calls that politics, and regards it as one of his smaller vices; but me?" scoffed the young man, "when I go gamboling down the primrose path of dalliance with a lady on each arm—or maybe more, I am haled before the calif and sentenced to his large and virtuous displeasure. Man,"—here young Mr. Van Dorn drummed his fingers on the showcase and considered the universe calmly through the store window—"man is the blindest of mammals." After which smiling deliverance, Thomas Van Dorn picked up his morning paper, and his gloves, and stalked with some dignity into the street.

"Well, say,"—Brotherton was the first to speak—"rather cool—"

"Shame, shame!" cried John Kollander, as he buttoned up his blue coat with its brass buttons. "Where was Blaine when the bullets were thickest? Answer me that." No one answered, but Captain Morton began:

"Now, George, why, that's all right. Didn't the people vote the bonds after you fellows submitted 'em? Of course they did. The town wanted waterworks; Daniel Sands knew how to build 'em—eh? The people couldn't build 'em themselves, could they?" asked the Captain triumphantly. Brotherton laughed; Morty Sands grinned,—and, shame be to Amos Adams, the rugged Puritan, who had opposed the bonds in his paper so boldly, he only shook a sorrowful head and lifted no voice in protest. Such is the weakness of our thunderers without their lightning! Brotherton, who still seemed uneasy, went on: "Say, men, didn't that franchise call for a system of electric lights and gas in five years and a telephone system in ten years more—all for that $100,000; I'm right here to tell you we got a lot for our money."

Again Amos Adams swallowed his Adam's apple and cut in as boldly as a man may who thinks with his lead pencil:

"And don't forget the street car franchises you gave away at the same time. Water, light, gas, telephone and street car franchises for fifty years and one hundred thousand to boot! It seemed to me you were giving away a good deal!"

But John Kollander's approving nod and George Brotherton's great laugh overcame the editor, and the talk turned to other things.

There came a day in Harvey when men, looking back at events from the perspective of another day, believed that in those old days of Harvey, Daniel Sands was master and Dr. Nesbit was servant. And there was much evidence to indicate that Daniel's was the master spirit of those early times. But the evidence was merely based on facts, and facts often are far from the truth. The truth is that Daniel Sands was the beneficiary of much of the activity of Doctor Nesbit in those days, but the truth is also that Doctor Nesbit did what he did—won the county seat for Harvey, secured the railroad, promoted the bond election, which gave Daniel Sands the franchises for the distribution of water, gas and electricity—not because the Doctor had any particular regard for Daniel Sands but because, first of all, the good of the town, as the Doctor saw it, seemed to require him to act as he acted; and second, because his triumph at any of these elections meant power, and he was greedy for power. But he always used his power to make others happy. No man ever came to the Doctor looking for work that he could not find work for that man. Men in ditches, men on light poles, men in the court house, men at Daniel Sands's furnaces, men grading new streets, men working on city or county contracts knew but one source of authority in Harvey, and that was Doctor James Nesbit. Daniel Sands was a mere money grubbing incident of that power. Daniel could have won no one to vote with him; the county seat would have gone to a rival town, the railroad would not have veered five miles out of its way to reach Harvey, and a dozen promoters would have wrangled for a dozen franchises but for Dr. Nesbit.

And if Dr. Nesbit made it his business to see that Dick Bowman had work, it was somewhat because he knew how badly the little Bowmans needed food. And if he saw to it that Dick's vote in the council occasionally yielded him a

substantial return from those whom that vote benefited so munificently, it was partly because the Doctor felt how sorely Lida Bowman, silently bending over her washtub, needed the little comforts which the extra fifty-dollar bill would bring that Dick sometimes found in his monthly pay envelope. And if the Doctor saw to it that Ira Dooley was made foreman of the water works gang, or that Tom Williams had the contract for the stone work on the new court house, it was largely in payment for services rendered by Ira and Tom in bringing in the Second Ward for John Kollander for county clerk. The rewards of Ira and Tom in working for the Doctor were virtue's own; and if re-marking a hundred ballots was part of that blessed service, well and good. And also it must be recorded that the foremanship and the stone contract were somewhat the Doctor's way of showing Mrs. Dooley and Mrs. Williams that he wished them well.

Doctor Nesbit's scheme of politics included no punishments for his enemies, and he desired every one for his friend. The round, pink face, the high-roached, yellow hair, the friendly, blue eyes, had no place for hate in them, and in the high-pitched, soft voice was no note of terror to evil doers. His countenance did not betray his power; that was in his tireless little legs, his effective hands, and his shrewd brain motived by a heart too kind for the finer moral distinctions that men must make who go far in this world. Yet because he had a heart, a keen mind, even without much conscience, and a vision larger than those about him, Dr. Nesbit was their leader. He did not move in a large sphere, but in his small sphere he was the central force, the dominating spirit. And off in a dark corner, Daniel Sands, who was hunger incarnate and nothing more, spun his web, gathered the dust and the flies and the weaker insects and waxed fat. To say that his mind ruled Dr. Nesbit's, to say that Daniel Sands was master and Dr. Nesbit servant in those first decades of Harvey—whatever the facts may seem in those later days—is one of those ornately ridiculous travesties upon the truth that facts sometimes are arranged to make. But how little did they know what they were building! For they and their kind all over America working in the darkness of their own selfish desires, were laying footing stones—quite substantial yet

necessary—for the structure of a growing civilization which in its time, stripped of its scaffolding and extraneous debris, was to stand among the nations of the earth as a tower of righteousness in a stricken world.

CHAPTER IV

THE ADAMS FAMILY BIBLE LIES LIKE A GENTLEMAN

HOW light a line divides comedy from tragedy! When the ass speaks, or the man brays, there is comedy. Yet fate may stop the mouth of either man or ass, and in the dumb struggle for voice, if fate turns the screws of destiny upon duty, there is tragedy. Only the consequences of a day or a deed can decide whether it shall have the warm blessing of our smiles or the bitter benediction of our tears.

This, one must remember in reading the chapter of this story that shall follow. It is the close of the story to which Mary Adams, with her memory book and notes and clippings, has contributed much. For of the pile of envelopes all numbered in their order; the one marked "Margaret Müller" was the last envelope that she left. Now the package that concerns Margaret Müller may not be transcribed separately but must be woven into the woof of the tale. The package contains a clipping, a dozen closely written pages, and a photograph—a small photograph of a girl. The photograph is printed on the picture of a scroll, and the likeness of the girl does not throb with life as it did thirty years ago when it was taken. Then the plump, voluptuous arm and shoulders in the front of the picture seemed to exude life and to bristle with the temptation that lurked under the brown lashes shading her big, innocent, brown eyes. And her hair, her wonderful brown hair that fell in a great rope to her knees, in this photograph is hidden, and only her frizzes, covering a fine forehead, are emphasized by the picture maker. One may smile at the picture now, but then when it was taken it told of the red of her lips and the pink of her flesh, and the dimples that forever went flickering across her face. In those days, the old-fashioned picture portrayed with great clearness the joy and charm and impudence of that beautiful face. But now the picture is only grotesque.

It proves rather than discloses that once, when she was but a young girl, Margaret Müller had wonderfully molded arms and shoulders, regular features and enchanting eyes. But that is all the picture shows. In the photograph is no hint of her mellow voice, of her eager expression and of the smoldering fires of passion, ambition and purpose that smoked through those gay, bewitching eyes. The old-fashioned frizzled hair on her forehead, the obvious pose of her hand with its cheap rings, the curious cut of her dress, made after that travesty of the prevailing mode which country papers printed in their fashion columns, the black court-plaster beauty spot on her cheek and the lace fichu draped over her head and bare shoulders, all stand out like grinning gargoyles that keep much of the charm she had in those days imprisoned from our eyes to-day. So the picture alone is of no great service. Nor will the clipping tell much. It only records:

"Miss Margaret Müller, daughter of the late Herman Müller of Spring Township, this county, will teach school in District 18, the Adams District in Prospect Township, this fall and winter. She will board with the family of ye editor."

Now the reader must know that Margaret Müller's eyes had been turned to Harvey as to a magnet for three years. She had chosen the Adams district school in Prospect Township, because the Adams district school was nearer than any other school district to Harvey; she had gone to the Adamses to board because the little bleak house near the Wahoo was the nearest house in the district to Harvey and to a social circle which she desired to enter—the best that Harvey offered.

She saw Grant, a rough, ruddy, hardy lad, of her own time of life, moving in the very center of the society she cherished in her dreams, and Margaret had no gay inadvertence in her scheme of creation. So when the lank, strapping, red-headed boy of a man's height, with a man's shoulders and a child's heart, started to Harvey for high school every morning, as she started to teach her country school, he carried with him, beside his lunch, a definite impression that Margaret was a fine girl. Often, indeed, he thought her an extraordinarily fine girl. Tales of prowess he brought back from the Harvey

High School, and she listened with admiring face. For they related to youths whose names she knew as children of the socially elect.

A part of her admiration for Grant was due to the fact that Grant had leaped the social gulf—deep even then in Harvey—between those who lived on the hill, and the dwellers in the bottoms near the river.

This instinctively Margaret Müller knew, also—though perhaps unconsciously—that even if they lived in the bottoms, the Adamses were of the aristoi; because they were friends of the Nesbits, and Mrs. Nesbit of Maryland was the fountain head of all the social glory of Harvey. Thus Margaret Müller of Spring Township came to camp before Harvey for a lifetime siege, and took her ground where she could aim straight at the Nesbits and Kollanders and Sandses and Mortons and Calvins. With all her banners flying, banners gaudy and beautiful, banners that flapped for men and sometimes snapped at women, she set her forces down before Harvey, and saw the beleaguered city through the portals of Grant's fine, wide, blue eyes, within an easy day's walk of her own place in the world. So she hovered over Grant, played her brown eyes upon him, flattered him, unconsciously as is the way of the female, when it would win favor, and because she was wise, wiser than even her own head knew, she cast upon the youth a strange spell.

Those were the days when Margaret Müller came first to early bloom. They were the days when her personality was too big for her body, so it flowed into everything she wore; on the tips of every ribbon at her neck, she glowed with a kind of electric radiance. A flower in her hair seemed as much a part of her as the turn of her cleft chin. A bow at her bosom was vibrant with her. And to Grant even the things she touched, after she was gone, thrilled him as though they were of her.

Now the pages that are to follow in this chapter are not written for him who has reached that grand estate where he may feel disdain for the feverish follies of youth. A lad may be an ass; doubtless he is. A maid may be as fitful as the west wind, and in the story of the fitfulness and folly of the man and the maid, there is vast pathos and pain, from which

pathos and pain we may learn wisdom. Now the strange part of this story is not what befell the youth and the maid; for any tragedy that befalls a youth and a maid, is natural enough and in the order of things, as Heaven knows well. The strange part of this story is that Mary and Amos Adams were, for all their high hopes of the sunrise, like the rest of us in this world—only human; stricken with that inexplicable parental blindness that covers our eyes when those we love are most needing our care.

Yet how could they know that Grant needed their care? Was he not in their eyes the fairest of ten thousand? They enshrined him in a kind of holy vision. It seems odd that a strapping, pimple-faced, freckled, red-headed boy, loud-mouthed and husky-voiced, more or less turbulent and generally in trouble for his insistent defense of his weaker playmates—it seems odd that such a boy could be the center of such grand dreams as they dreamed for their boy. Yet there was the boy and there were the dreams. If he wrote a composition for school that pleased his parents, they were sure it foretold the future author, and among her bundle of notes for the Book, his mother has cherished the manuscript for his complete works. If at school Friday afternoon, he spoke a piece, "trippingly on the tongue," they harkened back over his ancestry to find the elder Adams of Massachusetts who was a great orator. When he drove a nail and made a creditable bobsled, they saw in him a future architect and stored the incident for the Romance that was to be biography. When he organized a base-ball club, they saw in him the budding leadership that should make him a ruler of men. Even Grant's odd mania to take up the cause of the weak—often foolish causes that revealed a kind of fanatic chivalry in him—Mary noted too; and saw the youth a mailed knight in the Great Battle that should precede and usher in the sunrise.

Jasper was a little boy and his parents loved him dearly; but Grant, the child of their honeymooning days, held their hearts. And so their vanity for him became a kind of mellow madness that separated them from a commonsense world. And here is a curious thing also—the very facts that were making Grant a leader of his fellows should have warned Mary and Amos that their son was setting out on his journey

from the heart of his childish paradise. He was growing tall, strong, big-voiced, with hands, broad and muscular, that made him a baseball catcher of a reputation wider than the school-grounds, yet he had a child's quick wit and merry heart. Such a boy dominated the school as a matter of course, yet so completely had his parents daubed their eyes with pride that they could not see that his leadership in school came from the fact that a man was rising in him—the far-casting shadow of a virility deep and significant as destiny itself. They could not see the man's body; they saw only the child's heart. It was natural that they should ask themselves what honor could possibly come to the house of Adams or to any house, for that matter, further than that which illumined it when Grant came home to announce that he had been elected President of the senior class in the Harvey High School and would deliver the valedictory address at commencement. When Mary and Amos learned that news, they had indeed found the hero for their book. After that, even his cousin, Morty Sands, home from college for a time, little, wiry, agile, and with a face half ferret and half angel, even Morty, who had an indefinite attachment for glowing exuberant Laura Nesbit, felt that so long as Grant held her attention—great, hulking, noisy, dominant Grant—even Morty arrayed in his college clothes, like Solomon, would have to wait until the fancy for Grant had passed. So Morty backed Grant with all his pocket money as a ball player while he fluttered rather gayly about Ave Calvin—and always with an effect of inadvertence.

Now if a lad is an ass—and he is—how should a poor jack be supposed to know of the wisdom of the serpent? For we must remember that early youth has been newly driven from the heart of that paradise wherein there is no good and evil. He gropes in darkness as he comes nearer the gates of his paradise, through an unchartered wilderness. But to Mary and Amos, Grant seemed to be wandering in the very midst of his Eden. They did not realize how he was groping and stumbling, nor could they know what a load he carried—this ass of a lad coming toward the gate of the Garden. In those times when he sat in his room, trying to show his soul bashfully to Laura Nesbit as he wrote to her in Maryland

at school, Grant felt always, over and about him, the consciousness of the spell of Margaret Müller, yet he did not know what the spell was. He wrestled with it when finally he came rather dimly to sense it, and tried with all the strength of his ungainly soul to be loyal to the choice of his heart. His will was loyal, yet the smiles, the eyes, the soft tempting face of Margaret always were near him. Furious storms of feeling swayed him. For youth is the time of tempest. In our teens come those floods of soul stuff through the gates of heredity, swinging open for the last time in life, floods that bring into the world the stores of the qualities of mind and heart from outside ourselves; floods stored in Heaven's reservoir, gushing from the almost limitlessly deep springs of our ancestry; floods which draw us in resistless currents to our destinies. And so the ass, laden with this relay of life from the source of life, that every young, blind ass brings into the world, floundered in the flood.

Grant thought his experience was unique. Yet it is the common lot of man. To feel his soul exposed at a thousand new areas of sense; to see a new heaven and a new earth—strange, mysterious, beautiful, unfolding to his eyes; to smell new scents; to hear new sounds in the woods and fields; to look open-eyed and wondering at new relations of things that unfold in the humdrum world about him, as he flees out of the blind paradise of childhood; to dream new dreams; to aspire to new heights, to feel impulses coming out of the dark that tremble like the blare of trumpets in the soul,—this is the way of youth.

With all his loyalty for Laura Nesbit—loyalty that enshrined her as a comrade and friend, such is the contradiction of youth that he was madly jealous of every big boy at the country school who cast eyes at Margaret Müller. And because she was ages older than he, she knew it; and it pleased her. She knew that she could make all his combs and crests and bands and wattles and spurs glisten, and he knew in some deep instinct that when she sang the emotion in her voice was a call to him that he could not put into words. Thus through the autumn, Margaret and Grant were thrown together daily in the drab little house by the river. Now a boy and a girl thrown together commonly make the speaking

donkeys of comedy. Yet one never may be sure that they may not be the dumb struggling creatures of the tragic muse. Heaven knows Margaret Müller was funny enough in her capers. For she related her antics—her grand pouts, her elaborate condescensions, her crass coquetry and her hidings and seekings—into what she called a "case." In the only wisdom she knew, to open a flirtation was to have a "case." So Margaret ogled and laughed and touched and ran and giggled and cried and played with her prey with a practiced lore of the heart that was far beyond the boy's knowledge. Grant did not know what spell was upon him. He did not know that his great lithe body, his gripping hands, his firm legs and his long arms that had in their sinews the power that challenged her to wrestle when she was with him—he did not know what he meant to the girl who was forever teasing and bantering him when they were alone. For it was only when Margaret and Grant were alone or when no one but little Jasper was with them, that Margaret indulged in the joys of the chase. Yet often when other boys came to see her—the country boys from the Prospect school district perhaps, or lorn swains trailing up from Spring Township—Margaret did not conceal her fluttering delight in them from Mary Adams. So the elder woman and the girl had long talks in which Margaret agreed so entirely with Mary Adams that Mary doubted the evidence of her eyes. And Amos in those days was much interested in certain transcendental communications coming from his Planchette board and purporting to be from Emerson who had recently passed over. So Amos had no eyes for Margaret and Mary was fooled by the girl's fine speech. Yet sometimes late at night when Margaret was coming in from a walk or a ride with one of her young men, Mary heard a laugh—a high, hysterical laugh—that disquieted Mary Adams in spite of all Margaret's fair speaking. But never once did Mary connect in her mind Margaret's wiles with Grant. Such is the blindness of mothers; such is the deep wisdom of women!

All the while Grant floundered more hopelessly into the quicksand of Margaret's enchantment, and when he tried to write to Laura Nesbit, half-formed shames fluttered and flushed across his mind. So often he sat alone for long night

hours in his attic bedroom in vague agonies and self accusations, pen in hand, trying to find honest words that would fill out his tedious letter. Being a boy and being not entirely outside the gate of his childish paradise, he did not understand the shadow that was clouding his heart.

But there came one day when the gate closed and looking back, he saw the angel—the angel with the flaming sword. Then he knew. Then he saw the face that made the shadow and that day a great trembling came into his soul, a blackness of unspeakable woe came over him, and he was ashamed of the light. After that he never wrote to Laura Nesbit.

In May Margaret's school closed, and the Adamses asked her to remain with them for the summer, and she consented rather listlessly. The busy days of the June harvest combined with the duties of printing a newspaper made their Sunday visits with the Nesbits irregular. It was in July that Mrs. Nesbit asked for Margaret, and Mary Adams remembered that Margaret, whose listlessness had grown into sullenness, had found some excuse for being absent whenever the Nesbits came to spend the afternoon with the Adamses. Then in August, when Amos came home one night, he saw Margaret hurry from the front porch. He went into the house and heard Mary and Grant sobbing inside and heard Mary's voice lifted in prayer, with agony in her voice. It was no prayer for forgiveness nor for mercy, but for guidance and strength, and he stepped to the bedroom and saw the two kneeling there with Margaret's shawl over the chair where Mary knelt. There he heard Mary tell the story of her boy's shame to her God.

Death and partings have come across that threshold during these three decades. Amos Adams has known anguish and has sat with grief many times, but nothing ever has cut him to the heart like the dead, hopeless woe in Mary's voice as she prayed there in the bedroom with Grant that August night. A terrible half-hour came when Mary and Amos talked with Margaret. For over their shame at what their son had done, above their love for him, even beyond their high hope for him, rose their sense of duty to the child who was coming. For the child they spent the passion of their shame and love and hope as they pleaded with Margaret for

a child's right to a name. But she had hardened her heart. She shook her head and would not listen to their pleadings. Then they sent Grant to her. It is not easy to say which was more dreadful, the impudent smile which she turned to the parents as she shook her head at them, or the scornful laugh they heard when Grant sat with her. That was a long and weary night they spent and the sun rose in the morning under a cloud that never was lifted from their hearts.

In the six or seven sordid, awful weeks that followed before Kenyon was born, they turned for comfort and for help to Dr. Nesbit. They made his plan to save the child's good name, their plan. Of course—the Adamses were selfish. They felt a blight was on their boy's life. They could not understand that in Heaven there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage; that when God sends a soul through the gates of earth it comes in joy even though we greet it in sorrow. Their gloom should have been lighted; part of its blackness was their own vain pride in Grant. Yet they were none the less tender with Margaret, and when she went down into the valley of the shadow, Mary went with her and stood and supported the girl in the journey.

When Doctor Nesbit was climbing into the buggy at the gate, Grant, standing by the hitching-post, said: "Doctor—sometime—when we are both older—I mean Laura—" He got no further. The Doctor looked at the boy's ashen face, and knew the cost of the words he was speaking. He stopped, reached his hand out to Grant and touched his shoulder. "I think I know, Grant—some day I shall tell her." He got into the buggy, looked at the lad a moment and said in his high, squeaky voice: "Well, Grant, boy, you understand after all it's your burden—don't you? Your mother has saved Margaret's good name. But son—son, don't you let the folks bear that burden." He paused a moment further and sighed: "Well, good-by, kid—God help you, and make a man of you," and so turning his cramping buggy, he drove away in the dusk.

Thus came Kenyon Adams, recorded in the family Bible as the third son of Mary and Amos Adams, into the wilderness of this world.

CHAPTER V

IN WHICH MARGARET MÜLLER DWELLS IN MARBLE HALLS AND HENRY FENN AND KENYON ADAMS WIN NOTABLE VICTORIES

THE world into which Kenyon Adams came was a busy and noisy and ruthless world. The prairie grass was leaving Harvey when Grant Adams came, and the meadow lark left in the year that Jasper came. When Kenyon entered, even the blue sky that bent over it was threatened. For Dr. Nesbit returning from the Adamses the evening that Kenyon came to Harvey found around the well-drill at Jamey McPherson's a great excited crowd. Men were elbowing each other and craning their necks, and wagging their heads as they looked at the core of the drill. For it contained unmistakably a long worm of coal. And that night saw rising over Harvey such dreams as made the angels sick; for the dreams were all of money, and its vain display and power. And when men rose after dreaming those dreams, they swept little Jamey McPherson away in short order. For he had not the high talents of the money maker. He had only persistence, industry and a hopeful spirit and a vague vision that he was discovering coal for the common good. So when Daniel Sands put his mind to bear upon the worm of coal that came wriggling up from the drilled hole on Jamey's lot, the worm crawled away from Jamey and Jamey went to work in the shaft that Daniel sank on his vacant lot near the McPherson home. The coal smoke from Daniel Sands's mines began to splotch the blue sky above the town, and Kenyon Adams missed the large leisure and joyous comraderie that Grant had seen; indeed the only leisurely person whom Kenyon saw in his life until he was—Heaven knows how old—was Rhoda Kollander. The hum and bustle of Harvey did not ruffle the calm waters of her soul. She of all the women in Harvey held to the early custom of the town of going out to spend the day.

"So that Margaret's gone," she was saying to Mary Adams sometime during a morning in the spring after Kenyon was born. "Law me—I wouldn't have a boarder. I tell John, the sanctity of the home is invaded by boarders these days; and her going out to the dances in town the way she does, I sh'd think you'd be glad to be alone again, and to have your own little flock to do for. And so Grant's going to be a carpenter—well, well! He didn't take to the printing trade, did he? My, my!" she sighed, and folded her hands above her apron—the apron which she always put on after a meal, as if to help with the dishes, but which she never soiled or wrinkled—"I tell John I'm so thankful our little Fred has such a nice place. He waits table there at the Palace, and gets all his meals—such nice food, and can go to school too, and you wouldn't believe it if I'd tell you all the nice men he meets—drummers and everything, and he's getting such good manners. I tell John there's nothing like the kind of folks a boy is with in his teens to make him. And he sees Tom Van Dorn every day nearly and sometimes gets a dime for serving him, and now, honest, Mary, you wouldn't believe it, but Freddie says the help around the hotel say that Mauling girl at the cigar stand thinks Tom's going to marry her, but law me—he's aiming higher than the Maulings. The old man is going to die—did you know it? They came for John to sit up with him last night. John's an Odd Fellow, you know. But speaking of that Margaret, you know she's a friend of Violet's and slips into the cigar stand sometimes and Violet introduces Margaret to some nice drummers. And I heard John say that when Margaret gets this term of school taught here, the Spring Township people have made Doc Jim get her a job in the court house—register of deeds office. But I tell John—law me, you men are the worst gossips! Talk about women!"

Little Kenyon in his crib was restless, and Mary Adams was clattering the dishes, so between the two evils, Mrs. Kollander picked up the child, and rocked him and patted him and then went on: "I was over and spent the day with the Sandses the other day. Poor woman, she's real puny. Ann's such a pretty child and Mrs. Sands says that Morty's not goin' back to college again. And she says he just moons

around Laura Nesbit. Seems like the boy's got no sense. Why, Laura's just a child—she's Grant's age, isn't she—not more than eighteen or nineteen, and Morty must be nearly twenty-three. My—how they have sprung up. I tell John—why, I'll be thirty-six right soon now, and here I've worked and slaved my youth away and I'll be an old woman before we know it." She laughed good naturedly and rocked the fretting child. "Law me, Mary Adams, I sh'd think you'd want Grant to stay with George Brotherton there in the cigar stand, instead of carpentering. Such elegant people he can meet there, and such refined influences since Mr. Brotherton's put in books and newspapers, and he could work in the printing office and deliver the Kansas City and St. Louis and Chicago dailies for Mr. Brotherton, and do so much better than he can carpentering. I tell John, if we can just keep our boy among nice people until he's twenty-five, he'll stay with 'em. Now look at Lide Bowman. Mary Adams, we know she was a smart woman until she married Dick and now just see her—living down there with the shanty trash and all those ignorant foreigners, and she's growing like 'em. She's lost two of her babies, and that seems to be weighing on her mind, and I can't persuade her to pick up and move out of there. It's like being in another world. And Mary Adams—let me tell you—Casper Herdicker has gone into the mine. Yes, sir, he closed his shop and is going to work in the mine, because he can make three dollars a day. But law me! you'll not see Hildy Herdicker moving down there. She'll keep her millinery store and live with the white folks."

The dishes were put away, and in the long afternoon Mary Adams sat sewing as Rhoda Kollander rambled on. For the third time Rhoda came back to comment upon the fact that Grant Adams had quit working in the printing office—a genteel trade, and had stopped delivering papers for Mr. Brotherton's newspaper stand—a rather high vocation, and was degrading himself by learning the carpenter's trade, when Mary Adams cut into the current of the stream of talk.

"Well, my dear, it was this way. There are two reasons why Grant is learning the carpenter's trade. In the first place, the boy has some sort of a passion to cast his lot among

the poor. He feels they are neglected and—well, he has a sort of a fierce streak in him to fight for the under dog, and—"

"Well, law me, Mary—don't I know that? Hasn't Freddie told me time and again how Grant used to fight for Freddie when he was a little boy and the big boys plagued him. Grant whipped the whole school for teasing a little half-witted boy once—did you know that?" Mary Adams shook her head. "Well, he did, and—well now, isn't that nice. I can see just how he feels!" And she could. Never lived a more sympathetic soul than Rhoda. And as she rocked she said: "Of course, if that's the reason—law me, Mary, you never can tell how these children are going to turn out. Why, I tell John—"

"And the other reason is, Rhoda, that he is earning two dollars a day as a carpenter's helper, and since Kenyon came we seem to be miserably hard pushed for money." Mary Adams stopped and then went on as one carefully choosing her words: "And since Margaret has gone to board over at the other side of the school district, and we don't have her board money—why of course—"

"Why of course," echoed Mrs. Kollander, "of course. I tell John he's been in a county office now twenty years, drawing all the way from a thousand to three thousand a year—and what have we got to show for it? I scrimp and pinch and save, and John does too—but law me—it seems like the way times are—" Amos Adams, standing at the door, heard her and cut in:

"I was talking the other night with George Washington about the times, and they're coming around all right." The man fumbled his sandy beard, closed his eyes as if to remember something and went on: "Let's see, he wrote: 'Peas and potatoes preserve the people,' and the next day, everything in the market dropped but peas and potatoes." He nodded a wise head. "They think that planchette is nonsense, but how do they account for coincidences like that! And now tell me some news for the *Tribune.*" The two sat talking well into the twilight and when Rhoda pulled up her chair to the supper table, the editor's notebook was full.

Grant appeared, an ox-shouldered, red-haired, bass-voiced

boy with ham-like hands; Jasper came in from school full of the town's adventure into coal and the industries, and his chatter trickled into the powerful but slowly spoken insistence of Mrs. Kollander's talk and was lost and swept finally into silence. After supper Grant retired to a book from the Sea-side Library, borrowed of Mr. Brotherton from stock—"Sesame and Lilies" was its title. Jasper plunged into his bookkeeping studies and by the wood stove in the sitting-room Rhoda Kollander held her levee until bedtime sent her home.

During the noon hour the next day in Mr. Brotherton's cigar store and news stand, the walnut bench was filled that he had just installed for the comfort of his customers. At one end, was Grant Adams who had hurried up from the mines to buy a paper-bound copy of Carlyle's "French Revolution"; next to him sat deaf John Kollander smoking his noon cigar, and beside Kollander sat stuttering Kyle Perry, thriftily sponging his morning Kansas City *Times* over Dr. Nesbit's shoulder. The absent brother always was on the griddle at Mr. Brotherton's amen corner, and the burnt offering of the moment was Henry Fenn. He had just broken over a protracted drouth—one of a year and a half—and the group was shaking sad heads over the county attorney's downfall. The doctor was saying, "It's a disease, just as the 'ladies, God bless 'em' will become a disease with Tom Van Dorn if he doesn't stop pretty soon—a nervous disease and sooner or later they will both go down. Poor Henry—Bedelia and I noticed him at the charity ball last night; he was—"

"A trifle polite—a wee bit too punctilious for these latitudes," laughed Brotherton from behind the counter.

"I was going to say decorative—what Mrs. Nesbit calls ornate—kind of rococco in manner," squeaked the doctor, and sighed. "And yet I can see he's still fighting his devil—still trying to keep from going clear under."

"It's a sh-sh-sh-a-ame that ma-a-an should have th-that kind of a d-d-d-devil in him—is-isis-n't it?" said Kyle Perry, and John Kollander, who had been smoking in peace, blurted out, "What else can be expected under a Democratic administration? Of course, they'll return the rebel flags. They'll

pension the rebel soldiers next!" He looked around for approval, and the smiles of the group would have lured him further but Tom Van Dorn came swinging through the door with his princely manner, and the Doctor rose to go. He motioned George Brotherton to the rear of the room and said gently:

"George—old man Mauling died an hour ago; John Dexter and I were there at the last. And John sent word for me to have you get your choir out—so I'll notify Mrs. Nesbit. Dexter said he was a lodge member with you—what lodge, George?"

"Odd Fellow," returned the big man, then asked, "Pall-bearer?"

"Yes," returned the Doctor. "There's no one else much but the lodge in his case. You will sing him to sleep with your choir and tuck him in as pall-bearer as you've been doing for the dead folks ever since you came to town." The Doctor turned to go, "Meet to-night at the house for choir practice, I suppose?"

Brotherton nodded, and turned to take a bill from Tom Van Dorn, who had pocketed a handful of cigars and a number of papers.

"We were just talking about Henry, Tom," remarked Mr. Brotherton, as he handed back the change.

"He's b-back-sl-slidden," prompted Perry.

"Oh, well—it's all right. Henry has his weaknesses—we all have our failings. But drunk or sober he danced a dozen times last night with that pretty school teacher from Prospect Township." Grant looked up from his book, as Van Dorn continued, "Gorgeous creature—" he shut his eyes and added: "Don't pity Henry when he can get a woman like that to favor him!"

As John Kollander thundered back some irrelevant comment on the moment's politics, Van Dorn led Brotherton to the further end of the counter and lowering his voice said:

"You know that Mauling girl at the Palace cigar counter?"

As Brotherton nodded, Van Dorn, dropping his voice to a whisper, said: "Her father's dead—poor child—she's been spending her money—she hasn't a cent. I know; I have

been talking to her more or less for a year or so. Which one of your lodges does the old man belong to, George?"

When the big man said: "Odd Fellows," Van Dorn reached into an inner coat pocket, brought out some bills and slipping them to Brotherton, so that the group on the bench in the corner could not see, Van Dorn mumbled:

"Tell her folks this came from the lodge—poor little creature, she's their sole support."

As Van Dorn lighted his cigar at the alcohol burner Henry Fenn turned into the store. Fenn stood among them and smiled his electric smile, that illumined his lean, drawn face and said, "Here," a pause, then, "I am," another pause, and a more searching smile, "I am again!"

Mr. Brotherton looked up from the magazine counter where he was sorting out *Centurys,* and *Harpers* and *Scribners* from a pile: "Say—" he roared at the newcomer, "Well—say, Henry—this won't do. Come—take a brace; pull yourself together. We are all for you."

"Yes," answered Fenn, smiling out of some incandescence in his heart, "that's just it: You're all for me. The boys over at Riley's saloon are all for me. Mother—God bless her, down at the house is for me so strong that she never flinches or falters. I can get every vote in the delegation, but my own!"

"Oh, Henry, why these tears?" sneered Van Dorn. "We've all got to have our fun."

"I presume, Tom," snapped Fenn, "that you've got your little affairs of the heart so that you can take 'em or let 'em alone!" But to the group in the amen corner, Fenn lifted up his head in shame. He looked like a whipped dog. One by one the crowd disappeared, all but Grant, who was bending over his book, and deaf John Kollander.

Fenn and Brotherton went back to Brotherton's desk and Fenn asked, "Did I—George, was it pretty bad last night? God she—she—that Müller girl—what a wonderful woman she is. George, do you suppose—" Fenn caught Grant's eyes wandering toward them. The name of Margaret Müller had reached his ears. But Fenn went on, lowering his voice: "I honestly believe she could, if any one could." Fenn put his lean, tapering hand upon Brotherton's broad fat paw,

and smiled a quaint, appreciative smile, frank and gentle. It was one of those smiles that carried agreement with what had been said, and with everything that might be said. Brotherton took up the hallelujah chorus for Margaret with: "Fine girl—bright, keen—well say, did you know she's buying the books here of me for the chautauqua course and is trying for a degree—something in her head besides hairpins —well, say!"

He stopped in the middle of the sentence, and brought down his great hand on his knee. "Well, say—observe me the prize idiot! Get the blue ribbon and pin it on your Uncle George. Look here at me overlooking the main bet. Well, say, Henry—here are the specifications of one large juicy plan. Funeral to-morrow—old man Mauling; obliging party to die. Uncle George and the angel choir to officiate with Uncle George doubling in brass as pall-bearer. The new Mrs. Sands, our bell-voiced contralto, is sick: also obliging party to be sick. Need new contralto: Müller girl has voice like morning star, or stars, as the case may be." Fenn flashed on his electric smile, and rose, looking a question.

"That's the idea, Henry, that finally wormed its way into my master mind," cried Brotherton, laughing his big laugh. "That's what I said before I spoke. You are to drive into Prospect Township this evening— Hey, Grant," called Brotherton to the boy on the bench in the Amen corner, "Does that pretty school ma'am board with you people?" And when Grant shook his head, Brotherton went on: "Yes —she's moved across the district I remember now. Well, anyway, Henry, you're to drive into Prospect Township this evening and produce one large, luscious brunette contralto for choir practice at General Nesbit's piano at eight o'clock sharp." He stood facing Fenn whose eyes were glowing. The lurking devil seemed to slink away from him. Brotherton, seeing the change, again burst into his laugh and bringing Fenn to the front of the store roared: "Well, say —Hennery—are there any flies on your Uncle George's scheme?"

Grant began buttoning his coat. Fenn, free for the moment of his devil, was happy, and Brotherton looked at the

two and cried, "Now get out of here—the both of you: you're spiling trade. And say," called Brotherton to Fenn, "bring her up to the Palace Hotel for supper, and we'll fill her full of rich food, so's she can sing—well, say!"

That evening going home Grant met Margaret and Fenn at a turn of the road, and before they noticed him, he saw a familiar look in her eyes as she gazed at the man, saw how closely they were sitting in the buggy, saw a score of little things that sent the blood to his face and he strode on past them without speaking. That night he slipped into the room where the baby lay playing with his toes, and there, standing over the little fellow, the youth's eyes filled with tears and for the first time he felt the horror of the baby lifting from him. He did not touch the child, but tiptoed from the room ashamed to be seen.

To Margaret Müller, the baby's mother, that night opened a new world. To begin with, it marked her entrance through the portals of the Palace Hotel as a guest. She had sometimes flitted into the office with its loose, tiled floors and shabby, onyx splendor to speak to Miss Mauling of the news stand; then she came as a fugitive and saw things only furtively. But this night Margaret walked in through the "Ladies Entrance," sat calmly in the parlor, while Mr. Fenn wrote her name upon the register, and after some delirious moments of grand conversation with Mr. Fenn in the gilded hall of pleasure with its chenille draperies and its apoplectic furniture all puffed to the bursting point, she had walked with Mr. Fenn through the imposing halls of the wonderful edifice, like a rescued princess in a fairy tale, to the dining room, there to meet Mr. Brotherton, and the eldest Miss Morton, who recently had been playing the cabinet organ at funerals to guide Mr. Brotherton's choir. Now the eldest Miss Morton was not antique, being only a scant fifteen in short dresses and pig tails. But at the urgent request of Mr. Brotherton, and "to fill out the table, and to take the wrinkles out of her apron by a square meal at the Palace," as Mr. Brotherton explained to the Captain, she had been primped and curled and scared by her sisters and her father, and sent along with Mr. Brotherton—possibly in his great ulster pocket, and she sat breathing irregularly and

looking steadily into her lap in great awe and trepidation.

Margaret Müller, in the dining-room whose fame had spread to the outposts of Spring township and to the fastnesses of Prospect, behaved with scarcely less constraint than the eldest Miss Morton. She gazed at the beamed ceiling, the high wainscoting, the stenciled walls, the frescoes upon the panels, framed by the beams, the wide sideboard, the glittering glass and the plated silver service, and if her eyes had not been so beautiful they would have betrayed her wonder and admiration. As it was, they showed an ecstasy of delight that made them shine and when Henry Fenn saw them he looked at Mr. Brotherton, and Mr. Brotherton looked at Mr. Fenn, and the moon in Mr. Brotherton's face beamed a lively approval. Moreover the cigar salesman from Leavenworth and a hardware drummer from St. Louis and a drygoods salesman from Chicago and a travelling auditor for the Midland saw Margaret's eyes and they too looked at one another and gave their unqualified approval. In other years—in later years—when she was at Bertolini's Grand Palace in Naples or in some of the other Grand Palaces of other effete and luxurious capitals of Europe, Margaret used to think of that first meal at the Palace house in Harvey and wonder what in the world really did become of the dozen fried oysters that she so innocently ordered. She could see them looming up, a great pyramid of brown batter, garnished with cress, and she knew that she had blundered. But she did not see the wink that Mr. Brotherton gave Mr. Fenn nor the glare that Mr. Fenn gave Mr. Brotherton; so she faced it out and whether she ate them or left them, she never could recall.

But it was a glorious occasion in spite of the fried oysters. What though the tiles of the floor of the Palace were cracked; what though the curtains sagged, and the furniture was shabby, and the walls were faded and dingy; what though the great beams in the dining-room were dirty and the carpets in the halls bedraggled, and the onyx gapping in great cracks upon the warped walls of the office; what though the paint had faded and the varnish cracked all over the house! To Margaret Müller and also to the eldest Miss Morton, who only managed to breathe below her locket when

they were under the stars, it was a dream of marble halls, and the frowsy Freddie Kollander and the other waiter who brought in the food on thick, cracked oblong dishes were vassals and serfs by their sides.

When they started up Sixth Avenue, the eldest Miss Morton was trying to think of everything that had happened to tell the younger Misses Morton, Martha and Ruth—what they ate and what Miss Müller wore, and what Freddie Kollander who waited on them, and also went to high school, did when he saw her, and how Mr. Fenn acted when Miss Müller got the big platter of oysters, and what olives tasted like and if anything had been cooked in the Peerless Cooker that father had just sold Mr. Paxton and in general why the spirit of mortal should be proud.

But Miss Müller entertained no such thoughts. She was treading upon the air of some elysium, and she took and held Mr. Fenn's arm with an unnecessary tightness and began humming the tune that told of the girl who dreamed she dwelt in marble halls; and then, as they left the thick of the town and were walking along the board sidewalks that lead to Elm Crest on Elm Street, they all fell to singing that tune; and as one good tune deserved another, and as they were going to practice the funeral music that evening, they sang other tunes of a highly secular nature that need not be enumerated here. And as Miss Müller had a substantial dinner folded snugly within her, and the ambition of her life was looming but a few blocks ahead of her, she walked closer to Mr. Fenn, county attorney in and for Greeley county, than was really necessary. So when Mr. Brotherton walked alongside with the eldest Miss Morton stumbling intermittently over the edge of the sidewalk and walking in the dry weeds beside it, Miss Müller put some feeling into her singing voice and they struck what Mr. Brotherton was pleased to call a barbershop chord, and held it to his delight. And the frosty air rang with their voices, and the rich tremulous voice of the young woman thrilled with passion too deep for words. So deep was it that it might have stirred the hovering soul of the dead whose dirges they were to sing and brought back to him the time when he too had thrilled with youth and its inexpressible joy.

Up the hill they go, arm in arm, with fondling voices uttering the unutterable. And now they turn into a long, broad avenue of elms, of high, plumey elms trimmed and tended, mulched and cultivated for nearly twenty years, the apple of one man's eye; great elms set in blue grass, branching only at the tops, elms that stand in a grove around an irregular house, elms that shade a broad stone walk leading up to a wide, hospitable door. The young people ring. There is a stirring in the house, Margaret Müller's heart is a-flutter—and the eldest Miss Morton wonders whether Laura or the hired girl will open the door, and in a moment—enter Margaret Müller into the home of the Nesbits.

As the wide door opens, a glow of light and life falls upon the young people. Standing in the broad reception room is Doctor Nesbit, with his finger in a book—a poetry book if you please—and before him with his arm about her and her head beneath his chin stands his daughter. Coming down the stairs is Mrs. Bedelia Satterthwaite Nesbit—of the Maryland Satterthwaites—tall, well-upholstered, with large features and a Roman nose and with the makings of a double chin, if she ever would deign to bend her queenly head, and finally with the pomp of a major general in figure and mien.

She ignores the debris of the carpenters who have been putting in the hardwood floors, without glancing at it, and walking to her guests, welcomes them with regal splendor, receiving Miss Müller with rather obvious dignity. Mrs. Nesbit in those days was a woman of whom the doctor said, "There is no foolishness about Bedelia." The jovial Mr. Brotherton attempts some pleasant hyperbole of speech, which the hostess ignores and the Doctor greets with a smile. Mrs. Nesbit leads the way to the piano, being a woman of purpose, and whisks the eldest Miss Morton upon a stool and has the hymn book opened in less time than it takes to tell how she did it. The Doctor and Laura stand watching the company, and perhaps they stand awkwardly; which prompts Mr. Brotherton in the goodness of his heart to say, "Doctor, won't you sit and hear the music?"

Mrs. Nesbit looks around, sees the two figures standing near the fire and replies, "No, the Doctor won't."

To which he chirps a mocking echo—"No, the Doctor won't."

Mr. Brotherton glances at Mr. Fenn, and the Doctor sees it. "That's all right, boys—that's all right; I may be satrap of Harvey and have the power of life and death over my subjects, but that's down town. Out here, I'm the minority report."

Mrs. Nesbit opens the hymn book, smooths the fluttering leaves and says without looking toward the Doctor: "I suppose we may as well begin now." And she begins beating the time with her index finger and marking the accents with her foot.

As they sing they can hear the gentle drone of the Doctor's soft voice in the intervals in the music, reading in some nearby room to his daughter. They are reading Tennyson's "Maud" and sometimes in the emotional passages his voice breaks and his eyes fill up and he cannot go on. At such times, the daughter puts her head upon his shoulder and often wipes her tears away upon his coat and they are silent until he can begin again. When his throat cramps, she pats his cheek and they sit dreaming for a time and the dreams they dream and the dreams they read differ only in that the poetry is made with words.

It is a proud night for Margaret Müller. She has come into a new world—the world of her deep desire. Mrs. Nesbit sees the girl's wandering eyes, taking note of the furniture, as one making an inventory. No article of the vast array of vases and jars and plaques and jugs and statuettes and grotesque souvenirs of far journeys across the world, nor etchings nor steel engravings nor photographs of Roman antiquities nor storied urns nor animated busts escapes the wandering, curious brown eyes of the girl. But in her vast wonderment, though her eyes wander far and wide, they never are too far to flash back betimes at Henry Fenn's who drinks from the woman's eyes as from a deep and bewitching well. He does not see that she is staring. But as the minutes speed, he knows that he is electrified with alternating currents from her glowing face and that they bring to him a rapture that he has never known before.

But you may be sure of one thing: Mrs. Nesbit—she that

was Satterthwaite of the Maryland Satterthwaites—she sees what is in the wind. She is not wearing gold-rimmed nose glasses for her health. Her health is exceptionally good. And what is more to the point, as they are singing, Mrs. Nesbit gives George Brotherton a look—one of the genuine old Satterthwaite looks that speak volumes, and in effect it tells him that if he has any sense, he will take Henry Fenn home before he makes a fool of himself. And the eldest Miss Morton, swinging her legs under the piano stool and drumming away to Mrs. Nesbit's one- and two- and three- and four-ands, peeps out of the corners of her eyes and sees Miss Müller gobbling Mr. Fenn right down without chewing him, and whoopee but Mrs. Nesbit is biting nails, and Mr. Brotherton, he can't hardly keep his face straight from laughing at all, and if Ruth and Martha ever tell she will never tell them another thing in the world. And she mustn't forget to ask Mrs. Nesbit if she's used the Peerless Cooker and if she has, will she please say something nice about it to Mrs. Ahab Wright, for Papa is so anxious to sell one to the Wrights!

It is nearly nine o'clock. Mr. Fenn has been eaten up these twenty times. The wandering eyes have caressed the bric-a-brac over and over. Mrs. Nesbit's tireless index finger has marked the time while the great hands of the tall hall clock have crept around and halfway around again. They are upon the final rehearsal of it.

"Other refuge have I none," says the voice and the eyes say even more and are mutely answered by another pair of eyes.

"Hangs my helpless soul on thee," says the deep passionate voice, and the eyes say things even more tender to eyes that falter only because they are faint with joy. In the short interval the moving finger of Mrs. Nesbit goes up, and then comes a rattling of the great front door. A moment later it is opened and the flushed face of Grant Adams is seen. He is collarless, and untidy; he rushes into the room crying, "O, doctor—doctor, come—our baby—he is choking." The youth sees Margaret, and with passion cries: "Kenyon—Kenyon—the baby, he is dying; for God's sake—Mag, where is the Doctor?"

In an instant the little figure of the Doctor is in the room. He stares at the red-faced boy, and quick as a flash he sees the open mouth, the dazed, gaping eyes, the graying face of Margaret as she leans heavily upon George Brotherton. In another instant the Doctor sees her rally, grapple with herself, bring back the slow color as if by main strength, and smile a hard forced smile, as the boy stands in impotent anguish before them.

"I have the spring wagon here, Doctor—hurry—hurry please," expostulates the youth, as the Doctor climbs into his overcoat, and then looking at Margaret the boy exclaims wildly—"Wouldn't you like to go, too, Maggie? Wouldn't you?"

She has hold of herself now and replies: "No, Grant, I don't think your mother will need me," but she almost loses her grip as she asks weakly, "Do you?"

In another second they are gone, the boy and the Doctor, out into the night, and the horse's hoofs, clattering fainter and fainter as they hurry down the road, bring to her the sound of a little heart beating fainter and fainter, and she holds on to her soul with a hard hand.

Before long Margaret Müller and Henry Fenn are alone in a buggy driving to Prospect township.

She sees above her on the hill the lights in the great house of her desire. And she knows that down in the valley where shimmers a single light is a little body choking for breath, fighting for life.

"Hangs my helpless soul on thee," swirls through her brain, and she is cold—very cold, and sits aloof and will not talk, cannot talk. Ever the patter of the horse's feet in the valley is borne upward by the wind, and she feels in her soul the faltering of a little heart. She dares not hope that it will start up again; she cannot bear the fear that it will stop.

So she leaves the man who knew her inmost soul but an hour ago; hardly a word she speaks at parting; hardly she turns to him as she slips into the house, cold and shivering with the sound of every hoof-beat on the road in the night, bringing her back to the helpless soul fluttering in the little body that once she warmed in hers.

Thus the watchers watched the fighting through the night, the child fighting so hard to live. For life is dear to a child—even though its life perpetuates shame and brings only sorrow—life still is dear to that struggling little body there under that humble roof, where even those that love it, and hover in agony over it in its bed of torture, feel that if it goes out into the great mystery from whence it came, it will take a sad blot from the world with it. And so hope and fear and love and tenderness and grief are all mingled in the horror that it may die, in the mute question that asks if death would not be merciful and kind. And all night the watchers watched, and the watcher who was absent was afraid to pray, and as the daylight came in, wan and gray, the child on the rack of misery sank to sleep, and smiled a little smile of peace at victory.

Then in the pale dawn, a weary man, trudging afoot slowly up the hill into Harvey, met another going out into the fields. The Doctor looked up and was astonished to see Henry Fenn, with hard drawn features, trembling limbs, hollow eyes and set lips. He too had been fighting hard and he also had won his victory. The Doctor met the man's furtive, burning eyes and piped out softly:

"Stick to it, Henry—by God, stick hard," and trudged on into the morning gloaming.

CHAPTER VI

ENTER THE BEAUTY AND CHIVALRY OF HARVEY; ALSO HEREIN WE BREAK OUR FIRST HEART

TOWNS are curiously like individuals. They take their character largely from their experiences, laid layer upon layer in their consciousnesses, as time moves, and though the experiences are seemingly forgotten, the results of those experiences are ineffaceably written into the towns. Four or five towns lie buried under the Harvey that is to-day, each one possible only as the other upholds it, and all inexorably pointing to the destiny of the Harvey that is, and to the many other Harveys yet to rise upon the townsite—the Harveys that shall be. There was, of course, heredity before the town was; the strong New England strain of blood that was mixed in the Ohio Valley and about the Great Lakes and changed by the upheaval of the Civil War. Then came the hegira across the Mississippi and the infant town in the Missouri Valley—the town of the pioneers—the town that only obeyed its call and sought instinctively the school house, the newspaper, orderly government, real estate gambling and "the distant church that topt the neighboring hill." In the childhood of the town the cattle trail appeared and with the cattle trade came wild days and sad disorder. But the railroad moved westward and the cattle trail moved with the railroad and then in the early adolescence of the town came coal and gas and oil. And suddenly Harvey blossomed into youth.

It was a place of adventure; men were made rich overnight by the blow of a drill in a well. Then was the time for that equality of opportunity to come which the pioneers sought if ever it was coming. But alas, even in matters of sheer luck, the fates played favorites. In those fat years it began raining red-wheeled buggies on Sundays, and smart traps drawn by horses harnessed gaudily in

white or tan appeared on the streets. Morty Sands often hired a band from Omaha or Kansas City, and held high revel in the Sands opera house, where all the new dances of that halcyon day were tripped. The waters of the Wahoo echoed with the sounds of boating parties—also frequently given by Morty Sands, and his mandolin twittered gayly on a dozen porches during the summer evenings of that period. It was Morty who enticed Henry Fenn into the second suit of evening clothes ever displayed in Harvey, though Tom Van Dorn and George Brotherton appeared a week later in evening clothes plus white gloves and took much of the shine from Henry and Morty's splendor. Those were the days when Nate Perry and young Joe Calvin and Freddie Kollander organized the little crowd —the Spring Chickens, they called themselves—and the little crowd was wont to ape its elders and peek through the fence at the grandeur of the grown-ups. But alas for the little crowd, month by month it was doomed to see its little girls kidnaped to bloom in the upper gardens. Thus Emma Morton went; thus Ave Calvin disappeared, and so Laura Nesbit vanished from the Spring Chickens and appeared in Morty Sands's bower! Doctor Nesbit in those days called Morty the "'head gardener in the 'rosebud garden of girls!' " And a lovely garden it was. Of course, it was more or less democratic; for every one was going to be rich; every one was indeed just on the verge of riches, and lines of caste were loosely drawn. For wealth was the only line that marked the social differences. So when Henry Fenn, the young county attorney, in his new evening clothes brought Margaret Müller of the Register of Deeds office to Morty Sands's dances, Margaret had whatever social distinction her wits gave her; which upon the whole was as much distinction as Rhoda Kollander had whose husband employed Margaret. The press of the social duties in that day weighed heavily upon Rhoda, who was not the woman to neglect her larger responsibilities to so good a husband as John Kollander, by selfishly staying at home and keeping house for him. She had a place in society to maintain, that the flag of her country might not be sullied by barring John from a county office.

The real queen-rose in the garden was Laura Nesbit. How vivid she was! What lips she had in those days of her first full bloom, and what frank, searching eyes! And her laugh —that chimed like bells through the merriment of the youth that always was gathered about her—her laugh could start a reaction in Morty Sands's heart as far as he could hear the chime. It was a matter of common knowledge in the "crowd," that Morty Sands had one supreme aim in life: the courtship of Laura Nesbit. For her he lavished clothes upon himself until he became known as the iridescent dream! For her he bought a high-seated cart of great price, drawn by a black horse in white kid harness! For her he learned a whole concert of Schubert's songs upon the mandolin and organized a serenading quartette that wore the grass smooth under her window. For her candy, flowers, books—usually gift books with padded covers, or with handpainted decorations, or with sumptuous engravings upon them or in them, sifted into the Nesbits' front room, and lay in a thick coating upon the parlor table.

Someway these votive offerings didn't reach the heart of the goddess. She rode beside him in his stanhope, and she wore his bouquets and read his books, such as were intended for reading; and alas for her figure, she ate his candy. But these things did not prosper his suit. She was just looking around in the market of life. Pippa was forever passing through her heart singing, "God's in his heaven—all's right with the world." She did not blink at evil; she knew it, abhorred it, but challenged it with love. She had a vague idea that evil could be vanquished by inviting it out to dinner and having it in for tea frequently and she believed if it still refused to transform itself into good, that the thing to do with evil was to be a sister to it.

The closest she ever came to overcoming evil with evil was when she spanked little Joe Calvin for persisting in tying cans to the Morton cat's tail, whereupon Morty Sands rose and gave the girl nine rahs, exhibiting an enthusiasm that inspired him for a year. So Laura thought that if the spanking had not helped much the soul of little Joe, it had put something worth while into Morty Sands. The thought cheered her. For Morty was her problem. During the first

months after her return from boarding school, she had broken him—excepting upon minor moonlight relapses—of trying to kiss her, and she had sufficiently discouraged his declarations of undying devotion, so that they came only at weddings, or after other mitigating circumstances which, after pinching his ear, she was able to overlook.

But she could not get him to work for a living. He wouldn't even keep office hours. Lecturing settled nothing. Lecturing a youth in a black and gold blazer, duck trousers and a silk shirt and a red sash, with socks and hat to match his coat, lecturing a youth who plays the mandolin while you talk, and looks at you through hazel eyes with all the intelligence of an affectionate pup, lecturing a youth who you know would be kissing you at the moment if you weren't twenty pounds heavier and twice as strong—someway doesn't arouse enthusiasm. So Morty Sands remained a problem.

Now an affair of the heart when a man is in his twenties and a girl is just passing out of her teens, is never static; it is dynamic and always there is something doing.

It was after one of Morty's innumerable summer dances in the Sands Opera House, that Fate cast her dies for the final throw. Morty had filled Laura Nesbit's program scandalously full. Two Newports, three military schottisches, the York, the Racket—ask grandpa and grammer about these dances, ye who gyrate in to-day's mazes—two waltz quadrilles and a reel. And when you have danced half the evening with a beautiful girl, Fate is liable to be thumping vigorously on the door of your heart. So Morty walking home under a drooping August moon with Laura Nesbit that night determined to bring matters to a decision. As they came up the walk to the Nesbit home, the girl was humming the tune that beat upon his heart, and almost unconsciously they fell to waltzing. At the veranda steps they paused, and his arm was around her. She tried to move away from him, and cuffed him as she cried: "Now Morty—you know—you know very well what I've always—"

"Laura—Laura—" he cried, as he held her hand to his face and tried to focus her soul with his brown eyes, "Laura," he faltered, then words deserted him: the fine

speech he had planned melted into, "O, my dear—my dear!" But he kept her hand. The pain and passion in his voice cut into the girl's heart. She was not frightened. She did not care to run. She did not even take his persisting arm from about her. She let him kiss her hand reverently, then she sat with him on the veranda step and as they sat she drew his arm from her waist until it was hooked in her arm, and her hand held his.

"Oh, I'm in earnest to-night, Laura," said Morty, gripping her hand. "I'm staking my whole life to-night, Laura. I'm deadly—oh, quite deadly serious, Laura, and oh—"

"And I'm serious too, Morty," said the girl—"just as serious as you!" She slipped her hand away from his and put her hand upon his shoulder gently, almost tenderly. But the youth felt a certain calmness in her touch that disheartened him.

In a storm of despair he spoke: "Laura—Laura, can't you see—how can you let me go on loving you as I do until I am mad! Can't you see that my soul is yours and always has been! You can call it into heights it will never know without you! You—you—O, sometimes I feel that I could pray to you as to God!" He turned to her a face glowing with a white and holy passion, and dropped her hand from his shoulder and did not touch her as he spoke. Their eyes met steadfastly in a silence. Then the girl bowed her head and sobbed. For she knew, even in her teens, she knew with the intuitions that are old as human love upon the planet that she was in the naked presence of an adoring soul. When she could speak she picked up the man's soft white hand, and kissed it. She could not have voiced her eternal denial more certainly. And Morty Sands lifted an agonized face to the stars and his jaws trembled. He had lighted his altar fire and it was quenched. The girl, still holding his hand, said tenderly:

"I'm so sorry—so sorry, Morty. But I can't! I never—never—never can!" She hesitated, and repeated, shaking her head sadly, "I never, never can love you, Morty—never! And it's kind—"

"Yes, yes," he answered as one who realizes a finality. "It's kind enough—yes, I know you're kind, Laura!" He

stopped and gazed at her in the moonlight—and it was as if a flame on the charred altar of his heart had sprung up for a second as he spoke: "And I never—never shall—I never shall love any one else—I never, never shall!"

The girl rose. A moment later the youth followed her. Back into its sheath under his countenance his soul slipped, and he stood before the girl smiling a half deprecatory smile. But the girl's face was racked with sorrow. She had seen tragedy. Her pain wounded him and he winced in his heart. Wherefore he smiled quite genuinely, and stepped back, and threw a kiss at the girl as he said: "It's nothing, Laura! Don't mind! It's nothing at all and we'll forget it! Won't we?"

And turning away, he tripped down the walk, leaving her gazing after him in the moonlight. At the street he turned back with a gay little gesture, blew a kiss from his white finger tips and cried, "It's nothing at all—nothing at all!" And as she went indoors she heard him call, "It's nothing at all!"

She heard him lift his whistle to the tune of the waltz quadrille, but she stood with tears in her eyes until the brave tune died in the distance.

CHAPTER VII

IN WHICH WE SEE HOW LIFE TRANSLATES ITSELF INTO THE MATERIALISM AROUND IT

COAL and oil and gas and lead and zinc. The black sprite, the brown sprite, the invisible sprite, the two gray sprites—elemental sprites they were—destined to be bound servants of man. Yet when they came rushing out of the earth there at Harvey, man groveled before them, and sold his immortal soul to these trolls. Naturally enough Daniel Sands was the high priest at their altar. It was fitting that a devil worship which prostrated itself before coal and oil and gas and lead and zinc should make a spider the symbol of its servility. So the spider's web, all iron and steel in pipes below ground, all steel and iron and copper in wires and rails above ground, spread out over the town, over the country near the town, and all the pipes and tubes and rails and wires led to the dingy little room where Daniel Sands sat spinning his web. He was the town god. Even the gilded heifer of Baal was a nobler one. And the curious thing about this orgy of materialism, was that Harvey and all the thousands of Harveys great and small that filled America in those decades believed with all their hearts—and they were essentially kind hearts—that quick, easy and exorbitant profits, really made the equality of opportunity which every one desired. They thought in terms of democracy—which is at bottom a spiritual estate,—and they acted like gross materialists. So they fooled the world, while they deceived themselves. For the soul of America was not reflected in that debauch of gross profit making. The soul of America still aspired for justice; but in the folly of the day, believed quite complacently because a few men got rich quick (stupid men too,) and many men were well-to-do, that justice was achieved, and the world ready

for the millennium. But there came a day when Harvey, and all its kind saw the truth in shame.

And life in Harvey shaped itself into a vast greedy dream. A hard, metallic timbre came into the soft, high voice of Dr. James Nesbit, but did not warn men of the metallic plate that was galvanizing the Doctor's soul; nor did it disturb the Doctor. Amos Adams saw the tinplate covering, heard the sounding brass, and Mary his wife saw and heard too; but they were only two fools and the Doctor who loved them laughed at them and turned to the healing of the sick and the subjugation of his county. So men sent him to the state Senate. Curiously Mrs. Nesbit—she whom George Brotherton always called the General—she did not shake the spell of the trolls from her heart. They were building wings and ells and lean-tos on the house that she called her home, and she came to love the witchery of the time and place and did not see its folly. Yet there walked between these two entranced ones, another who should have awakened. For she was young, fresh from the gods of life. Her eyes, unflinching, glorious eyes, should have seen through the dream of that day. But they were only a girl's eyes and were happy, so they could not see beyond the spell that fell around them. And alas, even when the prince arrived, his kiss was poisoned too.

When young Thomas Van Dorn came to the Nesbit house on a voyage of exploration and discovery—came in a handsome suit of gray, with hat and handkerchief to match, and a flowing crepe tie, black to harmonize with his flowing mustache and his wing of fine jet black hair above his ivory tinted face, Laura Nesbit considered him reflectively, and catalogued him.

"Tom," explained the daughter to her father rather coldly one morning, after the young man had been reading Swinburne in his deep, mellow pipe-organ of a voice to the family until bed-time the night before, "Tom Van Dorn, father, is the kind of a man who needs the influence of some strong woman!"

Mrs. Nesbit glanced at her husband furtively and caught his grin as he piped gayly:

"Who also must carry the night key!"

The three laughed but the daughter went on with the cataloguing: "He is a young man of strong predilections, of definite purpose and more than ordinary intellectual capacity."

"And so far as I have counted, Laura," her father interrupted again, "I haven't found an honest hair in his handsome head; though I haven't completed the count yet!" The father smiled aimably as he made the final qualification.

The girl caught the mother's look of approval shimmering across the table and laughed her gay, bell-like chime. "O, you've made a bad guess, mother."

Again she laughed gayly: "It's not for me to open a school for the Direction of Miscalculated Purposes. Still," this she said seriously, "a strong woman is what he needs."

"Not omitting the latch-key," gibed her father, and the talk drifted into another current.

The next Sunday afternoon young Tom Van Dorn appeared with Rossetti added to his Swinburne, and crowded Morty Sands clear out of the hammock so that Morty had to sleep in a porch chair, and woke up frequently and was unhappy. While the gilded youth slept the Woman woke and listened, and Morty was left disconsolate.

The shadows were long and deep when Tom Van Dorn rose from the hammock, closed his book, and stood beside the girl, looking with a gentle tenderness from the burning depths of his black eyes into her eyes. He paused before starting away, and held up a hand so that she could see, wound about it, a flaxen hair, probably drawn from the hammock pillow. He smiled rather sadly, dropped his eyes to the book closed in his hands, and quoted softly:

"'And around his heart, one strangling golden hair!'"

He did not speak again, but walked off at a great stride down the stone path to the street. The next day Rossetti's sonnets came to Laura Nesbit in a box of roses.

The Sunday following Laura Nesbit made it a point to go with her parents to spend the day with the Adamses down by the river on their farm. But not until the Nesbits piled into their phaëton to leave did Grant appear. He met the visitors at the gate with a great bouquet of woods flowers, say-

ing, "Here, Mrs. Nesbit—I thought you might like them." But they found Laura's hands, and he smiled gratefully at her for taking them. As they drove off, leaving him looking eagerly after them, Dr. Nesbit said when they were out of hearing, "I tell you, girls—there's the makings of a man—a real man!"

That night Laura Nesbit in her room looking at the stars, rose and smelled the woods flowers on her table beside some fading roses.

As her day dreams merged into vague pictures flitting through her drowsy brain, she heard the plaintive, trembling voice of Morty Sands's mandolin, coming nearer and nearer, and his lower whistle taking the tune while the E string crooned an obligato; he passed the house, went down the street to the Mortons' and came back and went home again, still trilling his heart out like a bird. As the chirping faded into the night sounds, the girl smiled compassionately and slept.

As she slept young Thomas Van Dorn walked alone under the elm trees that plumed over the sidewalks in those environs with hands clasped behind him, occasionally gazing into the twinkling stars of the summer night, considering rather seriously many things. He had come out to think over his speech to the jury the next day in a murder case pending in the court. But the murderer kept sinking from his consciousness; the speech would not shape itself to please him, and the young lawyer was forever meeting rather squarely and abruptly the vision of Laura Nesbit, who seemed to be asking him disagreeable and conclusive questions, which he did not like to answer. Was she worth it—the sacrifice that marriage would require of him? Was he in love with her? What is love anyway? Wherein did it differ from certain other pleasurable emotions, to which he was not a stranger? And why was the consciousness of her growing larger and larger in his life? He tried to whistle reflectively, but he had no music in his soul and whistling gave him no solace.

It was midnight when he found himself walking past the Nesbit home, looking toward it and wondering which of the open windows was nearest to her. He flinched with

shame when he recollected himself before other houses gazing at other windows, and he unpursed his lips that were wont to whistle a signal, and went down the street shuddering. Then after an impulse in which some good angel of remorse shook his teeth to rouse his soul, he lifted his face to the sky and would have cried in his heart for help, but instead he smiled and went on, trying to think of his speech and resolving mightily to put Laura Nesbit out of his heart finally for the night. He held himself to his high resolve for four or five minutes. It is only fair to say that the white clad figure of the Doctor coming clicking up the street with his cane keeping time to a merry air that he hummed as he walked distracted the young man. His first thought was to turn off and avoid the Doctor who came along swinging his medicine case gayly. But there rushed over Van Dorn a feeling that he would like to meet the Doctor. He recognized that he would like to see any one who was near to Her. It was a pleasing sensation. He coddled it. He was proud of it; he knew what it meant. So he stopped the preoccupied figure in white, and cried, "Doctor—we're late to-night!"

"Well, Tom, I've got a right to be! Two more people in Harvey to-night than were here at five o'clock this afternoon because I am a trifle behindhand. Girl at your partner's —Joe Calvin's, and a boy down at Dick Bowman's!" He paused and smiled and added musingly, "And they're as tickled down at Dick's as though he was heir to a kingdom!"

"And Joe—I suppose—not quite—"

"Oh, Joe, he's still in the barn, I dropped in to tell him it was a girl. But he won't venture into the house to see the mother before noon to-morrow! Then he'll go when she's asleep!"

"Dick really isn't more than two jumps ahead of the wolf, is he, Doctor?"

"Well," grinned the elder man, "maybe a jump-and-a-half or two jumps."

The young man exclaimed, "Say, Doctor! I think it would be a pious act to make the fellows put up fifty dollars for Dick to-night. I'll just go down and raid a few poker games and make them do it."

The Doctor stopped him: "Better let me give it to Dick

if you get it, Tom!" Then he added, "Why do Christian hours, boy? You can't try that Yen morrow and be up all night!"

"That's just what I'm out here for, Doctor- head in shape for the closing speech."

"Well," sniffed the Doctor, "I wish you no b I hope you lose. Yengst is guilty, and you've no

"Doctor," cut in Van Dorn, "there's not a p Yengst case for me! He was a poor devil in he came to my office for help! Do you consider of your sick folks—whether they have lived v upright lives when they come to you stricken a They're just sick folks to you in your office, and poor devils in trouble for me."

The Doctor cocked his head on one side, s looked for a moment at the young man and piped brassy pup, aren't you!"

A second later the Doctor was trudging up homeward, humming his bee-like song. Van Do him until his white clothes faded into the shades o then he turned and walked slowly townward, wit behind him and his eyes on the ground. He Yengst case, and everything else in the univer girl's gray eyes, her radiant face, and the glory o ing soul. It was calling with all its power to Tom to rise and shine and take up the journey to the s when one hears that call, whether it come from m from friend or brother, or sweetheart or child, o challenge within him of the holy spirit, when h call, no matter where he is while he hears, he God!

So it came to pass the next day that Thomas went before the jury and pleaded for the murd Yengst case with the tongue of men and of angel knew that Dr. Nesbit was loitering in the clerk's joining the courtroom to listen to the plea. ulty of his mind and every capacity of his body and they said around the court house that it speech of Tom's life!" The Doctor on the front s courthouse met the young man in the daze that

oratorical flight, munching a sandwich to relieve while the multitude made way for him as he w office.

"Well, Tom—" piped the Doctor as he grasped t cold hands of the young orator, "if Yengst had cent do you suppose you could have done as well?"

Van Dorn gave his sandwich to a passing dog, the Doctor's arm as they walked to their common Before they had walked a dozen steps the Docto folded a situation in local politics that needed atte Van Dorn could not lead the elder man back t praises of his speech. Yet the young lawyer kne had moved the Doctor deeply.

That night in his office Tom Van Dorn and He sat with their feet in the window sill, looking th open window into the moon. In their discourse that elaborate, impersonal anonymity that youth e carry the baggage of its intimate confidences.

"I've got to have a pretty woman, Henry," quot yer to his friend, while the moon blushed behind "She must have beauty above everything, and good manners, and after that good blood."

The moon came out and smiled at Henry. "To tell you something, I don't care! I used to thi pickey and choosey. But I know my own heart. care! I'm the kind of fellow, I guess, who just g and comes down all broken out with it." He t glowing smile into Tom Van Dorn's face, and findin response smiled whimsically back at the moon.

"Some fellows are that way, Henry," assented "but not I! I couldn't love a servant girl no m pretty she was—not for keeps, and I couldn't lov princess, and I'd leave a bluestocking and elop chorus girl if I found the bluestocking crocked or the wash! Yet a beautiful woman, who remained and didn't become a moral guide—" he stared b the moon and in the cloud that whisked by he sa of fancies of other women whose faces had sh and had passed. He went on: "Oh, she could h she could hold me—I think!"

The street noises below filled the pause. Henry rose, looked eagerly into the sky and wistfully at the moon as he spoke, "Hold me? Hold me?" he cried. "Why, Tom, though I'd fall into hell myself a thousand times—she couldn't lose me! I'd still—still," he faltered, "I'd still—" He did not finish, but sat down and putting his hand on the arm of his friend's chair, he bent forward, smiled into the handsome young face in the moonlight and said: "Well—you know the kind of a fool I am, Tom—now!"

"That's what you say, Henry—that's what you say now." Van Dorn turned and looked at his friend. "You're sticking it out all right, Henry—against the rum fiend—I presume? When does your sentence expire?"

"Next October," answered Fenn.

"Going to make it then?"

"That's the understanding," returned Fenn.

"And you say you've got it bad," laughed Van Dorn. "And yet—say, Henry—why didn't you do better with the jury this afternoon in the Yengst case? Doesn't it—I mean that tremendous case you have on with the Duchess of Müller—doesn't it put an edge on you? What was the matter with you to-day?"

Fenn shook his head slowly and said: "It's different with me. I just couldn't help feeling that if I was worth any woman's giving herself—was worth anything as a man, I'd want to be dead square with that Yengst creature—and I got to thinking, maybe in his place, drunk and hungry—well, I just couldn't, Tom—because—because of—well, I wanted her to marry a human being first—not a county attorney!"

"You're a damn fool!" retorted Van Dorn. "Do you think you'll succeed in this world on that basis! I tell you if I was in love with a woman I'd want to take that Yengst case and lay it before her as a trophy I'd won—lay it before her like a dog!"

Fenn hesitated. He disliked to give pain. But finally he said, "I suppose, Tom, I'd like to lay it before her—like a man!"

"Hell's delight!" sneered Van Dorn, and they turned off the subject of the tender passion, and went to considering

certain stipulations that Van Dorn was asking of the county attorney in another matter before the court.

The next day young Thomas Van Dorn began rather definitely to prepare his pleading in still another suit in another court, and before the summer's end, Morty Sands's mandolin was wrapped in its chamois skin bag and locked in its mahogany case. Sometimes Morty, whistling softly and dolefully, would pass the Nesbit home late at night, hoping that his chirping might reach her heart; at times he made a rather formal call upon the entire Nesbit family, which he was obviously encouraged to repeat by the elders. But Morty was inclined to hide in the thicket of his sorrow and twitter his heart out to the cold stars. Tom Van Dorn pervaded the Nesbit home by day with his flowers and books and candy, and by night—as many nights a week as he could buy, beg or steal—by night he pervaded the Nesbit home like an obstinate haunt.

He fell upon the whole family and made violent love to the Doctor and Mrs. Nesbit. He read Browning to the Doctor and did his errands in politics like a retrieving dog. Mrs. Nesbit learned through him to her great joy that the Satterthwaite, who was the maternal grandfather of the Tory governor of Maryland, was not descended from the same Satterlee hanged by King John in his war with the barons, but from the Sussex branch of the family that remained loyal to the Crown. But Tom Van Dorn wasted no time or strength in foolishness with the daughter of the house. His attack upon her heart was direct and unhalting. He fended off other suitors with a kind of animal jealousy. He drove her even from so unimportant a family friend as Grant Adams.

Gradually, as the autumn deepened into winter and Tom Van Dorn found himself spending more and more time in the girl's company he had glimpses of his own low estate through the contrast forced upon him daily by his knowledge of what a good woman's soul was. The self-revelation frightened him; he was afraid of what he saw inside himself in those days, and there can be no doubt that for a season his soul was wrestling with its doom for release. No make-believe passion was it that spurred him forward in his

attack upon the heart of Laura Nesbit. Within him, there raged the fierce battle between the spirit of the times—crass, material and ruthless—and the spirit of things as they should be. It was the old fight between compromise and the ideal.

As for the girl, she was in that unsettled mind in which young women in their first twenties often find themselves when sensing by an instinct new to them the coming of a grown-up man with real matrimonial intentions. Given a girl somewhat above the middle height, with a slim, full-blown figure, with fair hair, curling and blowing about a pink and white face, and with solemn eyes—prematurely gray eyes, her father called them—with red lips, with white teeth that flashed when she smiled, and with a laugh like the murmur of gay waters; given a more than usual amount of inherited good sense, and combine that with a world of sentiment that perfect health can bring to a girl of twenty-two; then add one exceptionally fascinating man of thirty—more or less—a handsome young man; a successful man as young men go, with the oratorical temperament and enough of a head to be a good consulting lawyer as well as a jury lawyer with more than local reputation; add to the young man that vague social iridescence, or aura or halo that young men wear in glamor, and that old men wear in shame—a past; and then let public opinion agree that he is his own worst enemy and declare that if he only had some strong woman to take hold of him—and behold there are the ingredients of human gunpowder!

Doctor Nesbit smelled the burning powder. Vainly he tried to stamp out the fire before the explosion.

"Bedelia," said the Doctor one day, as the parents heard the girl talking eagerly with the young man, "what do you make out of this everlasting 'Tom, Tom, Tom,' out there in the living room?"

Mrs. Nesbit rocked in her chair and shook an ominous head. Finally she said: "I wish he'd Tom himself home and stay there, Doctor." The wife spoke as an oracle with emphasis and authority. "You must speak to the child!"

The little man puckered his loose-skinned face into a sad, absurdly pitiful smile and shrilled back:

"Yes—I did speak to her. And she—" he paused.

"Well?" demanded the mother.

"She just fed me back all the decent things I have said of Tom when he has done my errands." He drummed his fingers helplessly on his chair and sighed mournfully: "I wonder why I said those things! I really wonder!"

But the voices of the young people rose gayly and disturbed his musings.

It is easy now after a quarter of a century has unfolded its events for us to lay blame and grow wise in retrospect. It is easy to say that what happened was fore-doomed to happen; and yet here was a man, walking up and down the curved verandahs that Mrs. Nesbit had added to the house at odd times, walking up and down, and speaking to a girl in the moonlight, with much power and fire, of life and his dreams and his aspirations.

Over and over he had sung his mating song. Formerly he had made love as he tried lawsuits, exhibiting only such fervor as the case required. There can be no doubt, however, that when he made love to Laura Nesbit, it was with all the powers of his heart and mind. If he could plead with a jury for hire, if he could argue with the court and wrangle with council, how could he meet reason, combat objections, and present the case of his soul and make up the brief for his own destiny?

He did not try to shield himself when he wooed Laura Nesbit, but she saw all that he could be. A woman has her vanity of sex, her elaborate, prematernal pride in her powers, and when man appeals to a woman's powers for saving him, when he submits the proofs that he is worth saving, and when he is handsome, with an education in the lore of the heart that gives him charm and breaks down reserves and barriers—but these are bygones now—bygones these twenty-five years and more. What was to be had to be, and what might have been never was, and what their hopes and high aims were, whose hearts glowed in the fires of life in Harvey so long ago—and what all our vain, unfruited hopes are worth, only a just God who reads us truly may say. And a just God would give to the time and the place, the spirit of the age, its share in all that followed.

CHAPTER VIII

CAPTAIN MORTON ACTS AS COURT HERALD AND MORTY SANDS AND GRANT ADAMS HEAR SAD NEWS

SPRING in Mrs. Nesbit's garden, even in those days when a garden in Harvey meant chiefly lettuce and radishes and peas, was no casual event. Spring opened formally for the Nesbits with crocuses and hyacinths; smiled genially in golden forsythia, bridal wreath and tulips, preened itself in flags and lilacs before glowing in roses and peonies. Now the spring is always wise; for it knows what the winter only hopes or fears. Events burst forth in spring that have been hidden since their seedtime. And it was with the coming of the first crocuses that Dr. Nesbit found in his daughter's eyes a joyous look, new and exultant—a look which never had been inspired by the love he lavished upon her. It was not meant for him. Yet it was as truly a spring blossom as any that blushed in the garden. When it came and when the father realized that the mother also saw it, they feared to speak of it—even to themselves and by indirection.

For they knew their winter conspiracies had failed. In vain was the trip to Baltimore; in vain was the week with grand opera in New York, and they both knew that the proposed trip to Europe never would occur. When the parents saw that look of triumphant joy in their daughter's face, when they saw how it lighted up her countenance like a flame when Tom Van Dorn was near or was on his way to her, they knew that from the secret recesses of her heart, from the depths of her being, love was springing. They knew that they could not uproot it, and they had no heart to try. For they accepted love as a fact of life, and felt that when once it has seeded and grown upon a heart, it is a part of that heart and only God's own wisdom and mercy

may change the destiny that love has written upon the life in which love rests. So in the wisdom of the spring, the parents were mute and sad.

There was no hint of anger in their sorrow. They realized that if she was wrong, and they were right, she needed them vastly more than if they were wrong and she was right, and so they tried to rejoice with her—not of course expressly and baldly, but in a thousand ways that lay about them, they made her as happy as they could. Their sweet acquiescence in what she knew was cutting the elders to the quick, gave the girl many an hour of poignant distress. Yet the purpose of her heart was not moved. The Satterthwaite in her was dominant.

"Doctor," spoke the wife one morning as they sat alone over their breakfast, "I think—" She stopped, and he knew she was listening to the daughter, who was singing in an undertone in the garden.

"Yes," he answered, "so do I. I think they have settled it."

The man dropped his glance to the table before him, where his hands rested helplessly and cried, "Bedelia—I don't—I don't like it!"

The color of her woe darkened Mrs. Nesbit's face as her features trembled for a second, before she controlled herself. "No, Jim—no—no! I don't—I'm afraid—afraid, of I don't know what!"

"Of course, he's of excellent family—the very best!" the wife ventured.

"And he's making money—and has lots of money from his people!" returned the father.

"And he's a man among men!" added the mother.

"Oh, yes—very much that,—and he's trying to be decent! Honestly, Bedelia, I believe the fellow's got a new grip on himself!" The Doctor's voice had regained its timbre; it was just a little hard, and it broke an instant later as he cried: "O Lord, Lord, mother—we can't fool ourselves; let's not try!" They looked into the garden, where the girl stood by the blooming lilacs with her arms filled with blossoms.

At length the mother spoke, "What shall we do?"

"What can we do?" the Doctor echoed. "What can any human creatures do in these cases! To interfere does no good! The thing is here. Why has it come? I don't know." He repeated the last sentence piteously, and went on gently:

"'They say it was a stolen tide—the Lord who sent it, He knows all!' But why—why—why—did it wash in here? What does it mean? What have we done—and what—what has she done?"

The little Doctor looked up into the strong face of his wife rather helplessly, then the time spirit that is after all our sanity—touched them, and they smiled. "Perhaps, Jim," the smile broke into something almost like a laugh, "father said something like that to mother the day I stood among the magnolias trying to pluck courage with the flowers to tell him that I was going with you!"

They succeeded in raising a miserable little laugh, and he squeezed her hand.

The girl moved toward the house. The father turned and put on his hat as he went to meet her. She was a hesitant, self-conscious girl in pink, who stopped her father as he toddled down the front steps with his medicine case, and she put her hand upon him, saying:

"Father," she paused, looking eagerly at him, then continued, "there's the loveliest yellow flag over here." The father smiled, put his arm about the girl and piped: "So the pink rosebud will take us to the yellow flag!" They walked across the garden to the flower and she exclaimed: "Oh, father—isn't it lovely!"

The father looked tenderly into her gray eyes, patted her on the shoulder and with his arm still about her, he led her to a seat under the lilacs before the yellow flower. He looked from the flower to her face and then kissed her as he whispered: "Oh my dear, my dear." She threw her arms about him and buried her face, all flushed, upon his shoulder. He felt her quiver under the pressure of his arm and before she could look at him, she spoke:

"Oh, father! Father! You—you won't—you won't blame—" Then she lifted up her face to his and cried passionately: "But all the world could not stop it now—not

now! But, oh, father, I want you with me," and she shook his arm. "You must understand. You must see Tom as I see him, father." She looked the question of her soul in an anxious, searching glance. Her father reached for one of her hands and patted it. He gazed downward at the yellow iris, but did not see it.

"Yes, dear, I know—I understand."

"I was sure that you would know without my spelling it all out to you. But, oh, father," she cried, "I don't want you and mother to feel as you do about Tom, for you are wrong. You are all—all wrong!"

The Doctor's fat hand pressed the strong hand of the girl. "Well," he began slowly, his high-keyed voice was pitched to a soft tone and he spoke with a woman's gentleness, "Tom's quite a man, but—" he could only repeat, "quite a man." Then he added gently: "And I feel that he thinks it's genuine now—his—love for you, daughter." The Doctor's face twitched, and he swallowed a convulsive little sob as he said, "Laura—child—can't you see, it really makes no difference about Tom—not finally!" He blinked and gulped and went on with renewed courage. "Can't you see, child—you're all we've got—mother and I—and if you want Tom—why—" his face began to crumple, but he controlled it, and blurted out, "Why by johnnie you can have him. And what's more," his voice creaked with emotion as he brought his hand down on his knee, "I'm going to make Tom the best father-in-law in the whole United States." His body rocked for a moment as he spurred himself to a last effort. Then he said: "And mother—mother'll be—mother will—she'll make him—" he could get no further, but he felt the pressure of her hand, and knew that she understood. "Mother and I just want you to be happy and if it takes Tom for that—why Tom's what it takes, I guess—and that's all we want to know!"

The girl felt the tears on his face as she laid her cheek against his.

Then she spoke: "But you don't know him, father! You don't understand him! It's beautiful to be able to do what I can do—but," she shuddered, "it's so awful—I mean all that devil that used to be in him. He is so ashamed, so

sorry—and it's gone—all gone—all, every bit
father!" She put her father's hand to her fi
and whispered, "You think so, don't you, father
The father's eyes filled again and his th
"Laura," he said very gently, "my profession
this: You've a fighting chance with Tom
about one in ten. He's young. You're a stro
woman—lot's of good Satterthwaite in you, a
little of the obliging Nesbits. Now I'll tell yo
Laura; Tom's got a typical cancer on his sou
young; and you're young, and just now he's u
moral regeneration. You are new blood. You
him. If the moral tissue isn't all rotten, yo
him."
The girl gripped her father's hand and cried:
think I can—father, you think I can?"
"No," piped the little man sadly, "no, daugl
think you can. But I hope you can; and if y
know, I'm going to pray the God that sent
mother to give you the sense and power He gave
Doctor smiled, withdrew his arm, and started fo
He turned, "And if you do save him, Laura, I'
proud of you. For," he squeaked good nature
big job—but when you've done it you'll have
show for it—I'll say that for him—you'll ce
something to show for it," he repeated. He did
as he walked down the street and the daughter
he kept his eyes upon the ground. As he was a
from her view, he turned, waved his hand and
kiss, and with it she felt a blessing.
But curiously enough she saw only one of
company of Doctor Nesbits that trudged down t
white linen suit, under his broad-brimmed
Naturally she hardly might be expected to see th
less boss of Hancock and Greely counties, who
money of privilege seekers and bought and sol
as a part of the day's work. Nor could she be
see the helpless little man whose face crumpled,
sank and whose courage melted as he stood b
the garden, the sad, hopeless little man who, as h

the hill was captain of the groups that walked under his hat that hour. The amiable Doctor, who was everybody's friend and was loyal to those who served him, the daughter neglected that day; and the State Senator did not attract her. She saw only a gentle, tender, understanding father, whose love shone out of his face like a beacon and who threw merry kisses as he disappeared down the hill—a ruddy-faced, white phantom in a golden spring day!

Some place between his home and Market Street the father retired and the politician took command of Dr. Nesbit's soul And he gave thought to the Nesbit machine. The job of the moment before the machine was to make George Brotherton, who had the strength of a man who belonged to all the lodges in town, mayor of Harvey. "Help Harvey Hump" was George's alliterative slogan, and the translation of the slogan into terms of Nesbitese was found in a rather elaborate plan to legalize the issuance of bonds by the coal and oil towns adjacent to Harvey, so that Daniel Sands could spin out his web of iron and copper and steel,—rails and wires and pipes into these huddles of shanties that he might sell them light and heat and power and communication and transportation.

Even the boss—even Old Linen Pants—was not without his sense of humor, nor without his joyous moments when he relished human nature in large, raw portions. As he walked down the hill there flashed across his mind a consciousness of the pride of George Brotherton in his candidacy. That pride expressed itself in a feud George had with Violet Mauling who, having achieved stenography, was installed in the offices of Calvin & Van Dorn as a stenographer—*the* stenographer in fact. She on her part was profoundly proud of her job and expressed her pride in overhanging and exceeding mischievous looking bangs upon her low and rather narrow brow. In the feud between George and Violet, it was her consecrated task to keep him waiting as long as possible before admitting him to Van Dorn's inner room, and it was Mr. Brotherton's idea never to call her by her right name, nor by any name twice in succession. She was Inez or Maude or Mabel or Gwendolyn or Pet or Sweetheart or Dearest, in rapid succession, and in return for his

pseudonymnal attentions, Mr. Brotherton always was sure of receiving from Miss Mauling upon leaving the office, an elaborately turned-up nose. For Miss Mauling was peevish and far from happy. She had been conscious for nearly a year that her power over young Mr. Van Dorn was failing, or that her charms were waning, or that something was happening to clog or cloy her romance. On a certain May morning she had sat industriously writing, "When in the course of human events," "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary," "When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for a people to separate—" upon her typewriter, over and over and over again, while she listened to Captain Morton selling young Mr. Van Dorn a patent churn, and from the winks and nods and sly digs and nudges the Captain distributed through his canvass, it was obvious to Miss Mauling that affairs in certain quarters had reached a point.

That evening at Brotherton's Amen corner, where the gay young blades of the village were gathered—Captain Morton decided that as court herald of the community he should proclaim the banns between Thomas Van Dorn and Laura Nesbit. Naturally he desired a proper entrance into the conversation for his proclamation, but with the everlasting ting-aling and tym-ty-tum of Nathan Perry's mandolin and the jangling accompaniment of Morty's mandolin, opening for the court herald was not easy. Grant Adams was sitting at the opposite end of the bench from the Captain, deep in one of Mr. Brotherton's paper bound books—to-wit, "The Stones of Venice," and young Joe Calvin sadly smoking his first stogy, though still in his knickerbockers, was greedily feasting his eyes upon a copy of the pink *Police Gazette* hanging upon a rack above the counter. Henry Fenn and Mr. Brotherton were lounging over the cigar case, discussing matters of state as they affected a county attorney and a mayor, when the Captain, clearing his throat, addressed Mr. Brotherton thus:

"George—I sold two patent churns to two bridegrooms to-day—eh?" As the music stopped the Captain, looking at Henry Fenn, added reflectively: "Bet you four bits, George, you can't name the other one—what say?" No one

said and the Captain took up his solo. "Well—it's this-away: I see what I see next door. And I hear what my girls say. So this morning I sashays around the yard till I meets a certain young lady a standing by the yaller rose bush next to our line fence and I says: 'Good morning madam,' I says, 'from what I see and hear and cogitate,' I says, 'it's getting about time for you to join my list of regular customers.' And she kind of laughs like a Swiss bellringer's chime—the way she laughs; and she pretended she didn't understand. So I broadens out and says, 'I sold Rhody Kollander her first patent rocker the day she came to town to begin housekeeping with. I sold your pa and ma a patent gate before they had a fence. I sold Joe Calvin's woman her first apple corer, and I started Ahab Wright up in housekeeping by selling him a Peerless cooker. I've sold household necessities to every one of the Mrs. Sandses' and 'y gory, madam,' I says, 'next to the probate court and the preacher, I'm about the first necessity of a happy marriage in this man's town,' I says, 'and it looks to me,' I says, 'it certainly looks to me—' And I laughs and she laughs, all redded up and asts: 'Well, what are you selling this spring, Captain?' And I says, 'The Appomattox churn,' and then one word brought on another and she says finally, 'You just tell Tom to buy one for the first of our Lares and Penates,' though I got the last word wrong and tried to sell him Lares and spuds and then Lares and Murphies before he got what I was drivin' at. But I certainly sold the other bridegroom, Henry—eh?"

A silence greeted the Captain's remarks. In it the "Stones of Venice" grew bleak and cold for Grant Adams. He rose and walked rather aimlessly toward the water cooler in the rear of the store and gulped down two cups of water. When he came back to the bench the group there was busy with the Captain's news. But the music did not start again. Morty Sands sat staring into the pearl inlaid ring around the hole in his mandolin, and his chin trembled. The talk drifted away from the Captain's announcement in a moment, and Morty saw Grant Adams standing by the door, looking through a window into the street. Grant seemed a tower of strength. For a few minutes Morty tried

to restore his soul by thrumming a tune—a sweet, tinkly little tune, whose words kept dinging in his head:

"Love comes like a summer sigh, softly o'er us stealing;
"Love comes and we wonder why, at love's shrine we're kneeling!"

But that only unsteadied his chin further. So he tucked his mandolin under his arm, and moved rather stupidly over to Grant Adams. To Morty, Grant Adams, even though half a dozen years his junior, represented cousinship and fellowship. As Morty rose Grant stepped through the open door into the street and stood on the curb. Morty came tiptoeing up to the great rawboned youth and whispered:

"Grant—Grant—I'm so—so damned unhappy! You don't mind my telling you—do you?" Grant felt the arm of his cousin tighten around his own arm. Grant stared at the stars, and Morty gazed at the curb; presently he drew a deep sigh and said: "Thank you, Grant." He relaxed his hold of the boy's arm and walked away with his head down, and disappeared around the corner into the night. Slowly Grant followed him. Once or twice or perhaps three times he heard Morty trying vainly to thrum the sad little tune about the waywardness of love.

CHAPTER IX

WHEREIN HENRY FENN MAKES AN INTERESTING EXPERIMENT

THE formal announcement of the engagement of Laura Nesbit and Thomas Van Dorn came when Mrs. Nesbit began tearing out the old floors on the second story of the Nesbit home and replacing them with hardwood floors. Having the carpenters handy she added a round tower with which to impress the Schenectady Van Dorns with the importance of the Maryland Satterthwaites. In this architectural outburst the town read the news of the engagement. The town was so moved by the news that Mrs. Hilda Herdicker was able to sell to the young women of her millinery suzerainty sixty-three hats, which had been ordered "especially for Laura Nesbit," at prices ranging from $2.00 to $57. Each hat was carefully, indeed furtively, brought from under the counter, or from the back room of the shop or from a box on a high shelf and secretly exhibited and sold with injunctions that the Nesbits must not be told what Mrs. Herdicker had done. One of these hats was in reach of Violet Mauling's humble twenty dollars! Poor Violet was having a sad time in those days. No candy, no soda water, no ice cream, no flowers; no buggy rides, however clandestine, nor fervid glances—nothing but hard work was her unhappy lot and an occasional clash with Mr. Brotherton. Thus the morning after the newly elected Mayor had heard the formal announcement of the engagement, he hurried to the offices of Calvin & Van Dorn to congratulate his friend:

"Hello, Maudie," said Mr. Brotherton. "Oh, it isn't Maudie—well then, Trilby, tell Mr. Van Dorn the handsome gentleman has came."

Hearing Brotherton's noise Van Dorn appeared, to summon his guest to the private office.

"Well, you lucky old dog!" was Mr. Brotherton's greeting. "Well, say—this is his honor, the Mayor, come up to collect your dog tax! Well, say!" As he walked into the office all the secret society pins and charms and signets—the Shriners' charm, the Odd Fellows' links, the Woodmen's ax, the Elks' tooth, the Masons' square and compass, the Knights Templars' arms, were glistening upon his wrinkled front like a mosaic of jewels!

Mr. Brotherton shook his friend's hand, repeating over and over, "Well, say—" After the congratulatory ceremony was finished Mr. Brotherton cried, "You old scoundrel—I'd rather have your luck than a license to steal in a mint!" Then with an eye to business, he suggested: "I'll just about open a box of ten centers down at my home of the letters and arts for you when the boys drop around!" He backed out of the room still shaking Mr. Van Dorn's hand, and still roaring, "Well, say!" In the outer office he waved a gracious hand at Miss Mauling and cried, "Three sugars, please, Sadie—that will do for cream!" and went laughing his seismic laugh down the stairs.

That evening the cigar box stood on the counter in Brotherton's store. It was wreathed in smilax like a votive offering and on a card back of the box Mr. Brotherton had written these pious words:

"In loving memory of the late Tom Van Dorn,
Recently engaged.
For here, kind friends, we all must lie;
Turn, Sinner, turn before ye die!
Take one."

Seeing the box in the cloister and the brotherhood assembled upon the walnut bench Dr. Nesbit, who came in on a political errand, sniffed, and turned to Amos Adams. "Well, Amos," piped the Doctor, "how's Lincoln this evening?"

The editor looked up amiably at the pudgy, white-clad figure of the Doctor, and replied casually though earnestly, "Well, Doc Jim, I couldn't seem to get Lincoln to-day. But I did have a nice chat with Beecher last night and he said: 'Your friend, Dr. Nesbit, I observe, is a low church

Congregationalist.' And when I asked what he meant Beecher replied, 'High church Congregationalists believe in New England; low church Congregationalists believe in God!' Sounds like him—I could just see him twitching his lips and twinkling his eyes when it came!" Captain Morton looked suspiciously over his steel-bowed glasses to say testily:

"'Y gory, Amos—that thing will get you yet—what say?" he asked, turning for confirmation to the Doctor.

Amos Adams smiled gently at the Captain, but addressed the Doctor eagerly, as one more capable of understanding matters occult: "And I'll tell you another thing—Mr. Left is coming regularly now."

"Mr. Left?" sniffed the Captain.

"Yes," explained the editor carefully, "I was telling the Doctor last week that if I go into a dark room and blindfold myself and put a pencil in my left hand, a control who calls himself Mr. Left comes and writes messages from the Other Side."

"Any more sense to 'em than your crazy planchette?" scoffed Captain Morton.

The editor closed his eyes in triumph. "Read our editorial this week on President Cleveland and the Money Power?" he asked. The Captain nodded. "Mr. Left got it without the scratch of a 't' or the dot of an 'i' from Samuel J. Tilden." He opened his eyes to catch the astonishment of the listeners.

"Humph!" snorted the Doctor in his high, thin voice, "Old Tilden seems to have got terribly chummy with Karl Marx in the last two years."

"Well, I didn't write it, and Mary says it's not even like my handwrite. And that reminds me, Doctor, I got to get her prescription filled again. That tonic you give her seems to be kind of wearing off. The baby you know—" he stopped a moment vaguely. "Someway she doesn't seem strong."

Only the Doctor caught Grant's troubled look.

The Doctor snapped his watch, and looked at Brotherton. The Doctor was not the man to loaf long of an autumn evening before any election, and he turned to Amos and

said: "All right, Amos—we'll fix up something for Mary a little later. Now, George—get out that Fourth Ward voters' list and let's get to work!"

The group turned to the opening door and saw Henry Fenn, resplendent in a high silk hat and a conspicuously Sunday best suit, which advertised his condition, standing in the open door. "Good evening, gentlemen," he said slowly.

A look of common recognition of Fenn's case passed around the group in the corner. Fenn saw the look as he came in. He was walking painfully straight. "I may," he said, lapsing into the poetry that came welling from his memory and marked him for a drunken fool, "I may," opening his ardent eyes and glancing affectionately about, "have been toying with 'lucent syrups tinct with cinnamon' and my feet may be 'uncertain, coy and hard to please,' " he grinned with wide amiability, "but my head is clear as a bell." His eyes flashed nervously about the shop, resting upon nothing, seeing everything. He spied Grant, "Hello, Red," exclaimed Mr. Fenn, "glad to see you back again. 'M back again myself. Ye crags 'n' peaks 'm with you once again." As he flourished his silk hat he saw the consternation on Brotherton's big, moon face. Walking behind the counter he clapped both hands down on Brotherton's big shoulders. "Georgy, Georgy," he repeated mournfully:

"Old story, Georgy. Fight—fight, fight, then just a little, just a very little surrender; not going to give in, but just a nip for old sake's sake. Whoo-oo-oo-oo-p the skyrocket blazes and is gone, and then just another nip to cool the first and then a God damn big drink and—and—"

He laughed foolishly and leaned forward on the counter. As his arm touched the counter it brushed the smilax covered cigar box and sent the box and the cigars to the floor.

"Henry, you fool—you poor fool," cried Brotherton; but his voice was not angry as he said: "If you must mess up your own affairs for Heaven's sake have some respect for Tom's!"

"Tom's love affairs and mine," sneered the maudlin man. " 'They grew in beauty side by side.' But don't you fool

yourself," and Fenn wagged a drunken head, "Tom's devil isn't dead, she sleepeth, that's what she does. The maiden is not dead she sleepeth, and some day she'll wake up and then Tom's love affair will be where my love affair is." His eyes met the doctor's. Fenn sighed and laughed fatuously and then he straightened up and said: "Mr. George Brotherton, most worshipful master, Senior Warden, Grand High Potentate, Keeper of the Records and Seals—hear me. I'm going out to No. 826 Congress Street to see the fairest of her sex—the fairest of her sex." Then he smiled like the flash of a burning soul and continued:

> "'The cold, the changed, perchance the dead anew,
> The mourned, the loved, the lost.'"

And sighing a deep sigh, and again waving his silk hat in a profound bow, he was gone. The group in the store saw him step lightly into a waiting hack, and drive away out of their reach. Brotherton stood at the door and watched the carriage turn off Market Street, then came back, shaking a sorrowful head. He looked up at the Doctor and said: "She's bluffing—say, Doctor, you know her, what do you think?"

"Bluffing," returned the Doctor absently, then added quickly: "Come now, George, get your voters' list! It's getting late!"

George Brotherton looked blankly at the group. In every face but the Doctor's a genuine sorrow for their friend was marked. "Doc," Brotherton began apologetically, "I guess I'll just have to get you to let me off to-night!" He hesitated; then as he saw the company around him backing him up, "Why, Doc, the way I feel right now I don't care if the whole county ticket is licked! I can't work to-night, Doc—I just can't!"

The Doctor's face as he listened, changed. It was as though another soul had come upon the deck of his countenance. He answered softly in his piping voice, "No man could, George—after that!" Then turning to Grant the Doctor said gently, as one reminded of a forgotten purpose: "Come along with me, Grant." They mounted the stairs to the Doctor's office and when the door was closed the Doc-

tor motioned Grant to a chair and piped sharply: "Grant, Kenyon is wearing your mother's life out. I've just been down to see her. Look here, Grant, I want to know about Margaret? Does she ever come to see you folks—how does she treat Kenyon?"

Looking at the floor, Grant answered slowly, "Well she rode down on her wheel on his first birthday—slipped in when we were all out but mother, and cried and went on about her poor child, mother said, and left him a pair of little knit slippers. And she wrote him a birthday card the second time, but we didn't hear from her this time." He paused. "She never looks at him on the street, and she's just about quit speaking to me. But last winter, she came down and cried around one afternoon. Mother sent for her, I think."

"Why?" asked the Doctor quickly.

"Well," hesitated Grant, "it was when mother was first taken sick. I think father and mother thought maybe Maggie might see things different—well, about Kenyon." He stopped.

"Maggie and you?" prompted the Doctor.

"Well, something like that, perhaps," replied the boy.

The Doctor pushed back in his chair abruptly and cut in shrilly, "They still think you and Margaret should marry on account of Kenyon?" Grant nodded. "Do you want to marry her?" The Doctor leaned forward in his chair, watching the boy. The Doctor saw the flash of revulsion that spread over the youth's face before Grant raised his head, and met the Doctor's keen gaze and answered soberly, "I would if it was best."

"Well," the Doctor returned as if to himself. "I suppose so." To the younger man, he said: "Grant, she wouldn't marry you. She is after bigger game. As far as reforming Henry Fenn's concerned, she's bluffing. It doesn't interest her any more than Kenyon's lack of a mother."

The Doctor rose and Grant saw that the interview was over. The Doctor left the youth at the foot of the stairway and went out into the autumn night, where the stars could blink at all his wisdom. Though he, poor man, did not know

that they were winking. For often men who know good women and love them well, are as unjust to weak women as men are who know only those women who are frail.

That night Margaret Müller sat on the porch, where Henry Fenn left her, considering her problem. Now this problem did not remotely concern the Adamses—nor even Kenyon Adams. Margaret Müller's problem was centered in Henry Fenn, County Attorney of Greeley County; Henry Fenn, who had visited her gorgeously drunk; Henry Fenn on whose handsome shoulder she had enjoyed rather keenly shedding some virtuous tears in chiding him for his broken promise. Yet she knew that she would take him back. And she knew that he knew that he might come back. For she had moved far forward in the siege of Harvey. She was well within the walls of the beleaguered city, and was planning for the larger siege of life and destiny.

About all there is in life is one's fundamental choice between the spiritual and the material. After that choice is made, the die of life is cast. Events play upon that choice their curious pattern, bringing such griefs and joys, such calamities and winnings as every life must have. For that choice makes character, and character makes happiness. Margaret Müller sitting there in the night long after the last step of Henry Fenn had died away, thought of her lover's arms, remembered her lover's lips, but clearer and more moving than these vain things, her mind showed her what his hands could bring her and if her soul waved a duty signal, for the salvation of Henry Fenn, she shut her eyes to the signal and hurried into the house.

She was one of God's miracles of beauty the next day as she passed Grant Adams on the street, with his carpenter's box on his arm, going from the mine shaft to do some work in the office of the attorney for the mines. She barely nodded to Grant, yet the radiance of her beauty made him turn his head to gaze at her. Doctor Nesbit did that, and Captain Morton, and Dick Bowman,—even John Kollander turned, putting up his ear trumpet as if to hear the glory of her presence; the whole street turned after her as though some high wind had blown human heads backward when she passed. They saw a lithe, exquisite animal figure, poised

strongly on her feet, walking as in the very pride of sex, radiating charms consciously, but with all the grace of a flower in the breeze. Her bright eyes, her masses of dark hair, her dimpled face and neck, her lips that flamed with the joy of life, the enchantment of her whole body, was so complete a thing that morning, that she might well have told her story to the world. The little Doctor knew what her answer to Henry Fenn had been and always would be. He knew as well as though she had told him. In spite of himself, his heart melted a little and he had consciously to stop arguing with himself that she had done the wise thing; that to throw Henry over would only hasten an end, which her powerful personality might finally avert. But George Brotherton—when he saw the light in her eyes, was sad. In the core of him, because he loved his friend, he knew what had happened to that friend. He was sad—sad and resentful, vaguely and without reason, at the mien and bearing of Margaret Müller as she went to her work that morning.

Brotherton remembered her an hour later when, in the back part of the bookstore Henry Fenn sat, jaded, haggard, and with his dull face drawn with remorse,—a burned-out sky rocket. Brotherton was busy with his customers, but in a lull, and between sales as the trade passed in and out, they talked. Sometimes a customer coming in would interrupt them, but the talk went on as trade flowed by. It ran thus:

"Yes, George, but it's my salvation. She's the only anchor I have on earth."

"But she didn't hold you yesterday."

"I know, but God, George, it was terrific, the way that thing grabbed me yesterday. But it's all gone now."

"I know, Henry, but it will come back—can't you see what you'll be doing to her?"

Fenn, gray of face, with his straight, colorless hair, with his staring eyes, with his listless form, sat head in hands, gazing at the floor. He did not look up as he replied: "George, I just can't give her up; I won't give her up," he cried. "I believe, after the depths of love she showed me in her soul last night, I'd take her, if I knew I was taking

us both to hell. Just let me have a home, George,—and her and children—George, I know children would hold me—lots of children—I can make money. I've got money—all I need to marry on, and we'll have a home and children and they will hold me—keep me up."

In Volume XXI of the "Psychological Society's Publications," page 374, will be found a part of the observations of "Mr. Left," together with copious notes upon the Adams case by an eminent authority. The excerpt herewith printed is attributed by Mr. Left to Darwin or Huxley or perhaps one of the Brownings—it is unimportant to note just which one, for Mr. Left gleaned from a wide circle of intellects. The interesting thing is that about the time these love affairs we are considering were brewing, Mr. Left wrote: "If the natural selection of love is the triumph of evolution on this planet, if the free choice of youth and maiden, unhampered by class or nationality, or wealth, or age, or parental interference, or thought of material advantage, is the greatest step taken by life since it came mysteriously into this earth, how much of the importance of the natural selection of youth in love hangs upon full and free access to all the data necessary for choice."

What irony was in the free choice of these lovers here in Harvey that day when Mr. Left wrote this. What did Henry Fenn know of the heart or the soul of the woman he adored? What did Laura Nesbit know of her lover and what did he know of her? They all four walked blindfolded. Free choice for them was as remote and impossible as it would have been if they had been auctioned into bondage.

CHAPTER X

IN WHICH MARY ADAMS TAKES A MUCH NEEDED REST

THE changing seasons moved from autumn to winter, from winter to spring. One gray, wet March day, Grant Adams stood by the counter asking Mr. Brotherton to send to the city for roses.

"White roses, a dozen white roses." Mr. Brotherton turned his broad back as he wrote the order, and said gently: "They'll be down on No. 11 to-night, Grant,; I'll send 'em right out."

As Grant stood hesitating, ready to go, but dreading the street, Dr. Nesbit came in. He pressed the youth's hand and did not speak. He bought his tobacco and stood cleaning his pipe. "Could your father sleep any after—when I left, Grant?" asked the Doctor.

The young man shook his head. "Mrs. Nesbit is out there, isn't she?" the Doctor asked again.

"Yes," replied the youth, "she and Laura came out before we had breakfast. And Mrs. Dexter is there."

"Has any one else come?" asked the Doctor, looking up sharply from his pipe, and added, "I sent word to Margaret Müller."

Grant shook his head and the Doctor left the shop. At the doorway he met Captain Morton, and seemed to be telling him the news, for the Captain's face showed the sorrow and concern that he felt. He hurried in and took Grant's hand and held it affectionately.

"Grant, your mother was with my wife her last night on earth; I wish I could help you, son. I'll run right down to your father."

And the Captain left in the corner of the store the model of a patent coffee pot he was handling at the time and went away without his morning paper. Mr. Van Dorn

came in, picked up his paper, snipped off the end of his cigar at the machine, lighted the cigar, considered his fine raiment a moment, adjusted his soft hat at a proper angle, pulled up his tie, and seeing the youth, said: "By George, young man, this is sad news I hear; give the good father my sympathy. Too bad."

When Grant went home, the silence of death hung over the little house, in spite of the bustling of Mrs. Nesbit. And Grant sat outside on a stone by his father under the gray sky.

In the house the prattle of the child with the women made the house seem pitifully lonesome. Jasper was expressing his sorrow by chopping wood down in the timber. Jasper was an odd sheep in the flock; he was a Sands after Daniel's own heart. So Grant and his father sat together mourning in silence. Finally the father drew in a deep broken breath, and spoke with his eyes on the ground:

"'These also died in the faith, without having received the promise!'" Then he lifted up his face and mourned, "Mary—Mary—" and again, "Oh, Mary, we need—" The child's voice inside the house calling fretfully, "Mother! mother!" came to the two and brought a quick cramp to the older man's throat and tears to his eyes. Finally, Amos found voice to say:

"I was thinking how we—you and I and Jasper need mother! But our need is as nothing compared with the baby's. Poor—lonely little thing! I don't know what to do for him, Grant." He turned to his son helplessly.

Again the little voice was lifted, and Laura Nesbit could be heard hushing the child's complaint. Not looking at his father, Grant spoke: "Dr. Nesbit said he had let Margaret know—"

The father shook his head and returned, "I presumed he would!" He looked into his son's face and said: "Maggie doesn't see things as we do, son. But, oh—what can we do! And the little fellow needs her—needs some one, who will love him and take care of him. Oh, Mary—Mary—" he cried from his bewildered heart. "Be with us, Mary, and show us what to do!"

Grant rose, went into the house, bundled up Kenyon and

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between showers carried him and walked with him through the bleak woods of March, where the red bird's joyous song only cut into his heart and made the young man press closer to him the little form that snuggled in his arms.

At night Jasper went to his room above the kitchen and the father turned to his lonely bed. In the cold parlor Mary Adams lay. Grant sat in the kitchen by the stove, pressing to his face his mother's apron, only three days before left hanging by her own hands on the kitchen door. He clung to this last touch of her fingers, through the long night, and as he sat there his heart filled with a blind, vague, rather impotent purpose to take his mother's place with Kenyon. From time to time he rose to put wood in the stove, but always when he went back to his chair, and stroked the apron with his face, the baby seemed to be clinging to him. The thought of the little hands forever tugging at her apron racked him with sobs long after his tears were gone.

And so as responsibility rose in him he stepped across the border from youth to manhood.

They made him dress in his Sunday best the next morning and he was still so close to that borderland of boyhood that he was standing about the yard near the gate, looking rather lost and awkward when the Nesbits drove up with Kenyon, whom they had taken for the night. When the others had gone into the house the Doctor asked:

"Did she come, Grant?"

The youth lifted his face to the Doctor and looked him squarely in the eye as man to man and answered sharply, "No."

The Doctor cocked one eye reflectively and said slowly, "So—" and drove away.

It was nearly dusk when the Adamses came back from the cemetery to the empty house. But a bright fire was burning in the kitchen stove and the kettle was boiling and the odor of food cooking in the oven was in the air. Kenyon was moving fitfully about the front room. Mrs. Dexter was quietly setting the table. Amos Adams hung up his hat, took off his coat, and went to his rocker by the kitchen door; Jasper sat stiffly in the front room. Grant met Mrs. Dexter in the dining room, and she saw that the child had

hold of the young man's finger and she heard the baby calling, "Mother—mother! Grant, I want mother!" with a plaintive little cry, over and over again. Grant played with the child, showed the little fellow his toys and tried to stop the incessant call of "Mother—mother—where's mother!" At last the boy's eyes filled. He picked up the child, knocking his own new hat roughly to the floor. He drew up his chin, straightened his trembling jaw, batted his eyes so that the moisture left them and said to his father in a hard, low voice—a man's voice:

"I am going to Margaret; she must help."

It was dark when he came to town and walked up Congress Street with the little one snuggled in his arms. Just before he arrived at the house, the restless child had asked to walk, and they went hand in hand up the steps of the house where Margaret Müller lived. She was sitting alone on the veranda—clearly waiting for some one, and when she saw who was coming up the steps she rose and hurried to them, greeting them on the very threshold of the veranda. She was white and her bosom was fluttering as she asked in a tense whisper:

"What do you want—quick, what do you want?"

She stood before Grant, as if stopping his progress. The child's plaintive cry, "Mother—Grant, I want mother!" not in grief, but in a great question, was the answer.

He looked into her staring, terror-stricken eyes until they drooped and for a moment he dominated her. But she came back from some outpost of her nature with reënforcements.

"Get out of here—get out of here. Don't come here with your brat—get out," she snarled in a whisper. The child went to her, plucked her skirts and cried, "Mother, mother." Grant pointed to the baby and broke out: "Oh, Maggie—what's to become of Kenyon?—what can I do! He's only got you now. Oh, Maggie, won't you come?" He saw fear flit across her face in a tense second before she answered. Then fear left and she crouched at him trembling, red-eyed, gaping, mouthed, the embodiment of determined hate; swiping the child's little hands away from her, she snapped:

"Get out of here!—leave! quick!" He stood stubbornly

before her and only the child's voice crying, "Grant, Grant, I want to go home to mother," filled the silence. Finally she spoke again, cutting through the baby's complaint. "I shall never, never, never take that child; I loathe him, and I hate you and I want both of you always to keep away from me."

Without looking at her again, he caught up the toddling child, lifted it to his shoulder and walked down the steps. As they turned into the street they ran into Henry Fenn, who in his free choice of a mate was hurrying to one who he thought would give him a home—a home and children, many children to stand between him and his own insatiate devil. Henry greeted Grant:

"Why, boy—oh, yes, been to see Maggie? I wish she could help you, Grant."

And from the veranda came a sweet, rich voice, crying:

"Yes, Henry—do you know where they can get a good nurse girl?"

CHAPTER XI

HERE OUR FOOL GROPES FOR A SPIRIT AND CAN FIND ONLY DUST

HENRY FENN and Margaret Müller sat naming their wedding day, while Grant Adams walked home with his burden. Henry Fenn had been fighting through a long winter, against the lust for liquor that was consuming his flesh. At times it seemed to him that her presence as he fought his battle, helped him; but there were phases of his fight, when she too fashioned herself in his imagination as a temptress, and she seemed to blow upon the coals that were searing his weak flesh.

At such times he was taciturn, and went about his day's work as one who is busy at a serious task. He smiled his amiable smile, he played his man's part in the world without whimpering, and fought on like a gentleman. The night he met Grant and the child at the steps of the house where Margaret lived, he had called to set the day for their marriage. And that night she glowed before him and in his arms like a very brand of a woman blown upon by some wind from another world. When he left her his throat grew parched and dry and his lips quivered with a desire for liquor that seemed to simmer in his vitals. But he set his teeth, and ran to his room, and locked himself in, throwing the key out of the window into the yard. He sat shivering and whimpering and fighting, by turns conquering his devil, and panting under its weight, but always with the figure and face of his beloved in his eyes, sometimes beckoning him to fight on, sometimes coaxing him to yield and stop the struggle. But as the day came in he fell asleep with one more battle to his credit.

In Harvey for many years Henry Fenn's name was a byword; but the pitying angels who have seen him fight in the days of his strength and manhood—they looked at Henry

Fenn, and touched reverent foreheads in his high honor. Then why did they who know our hearts so well, let the blow fall upon him, you ask. But there you trespass upon that old question that the Doctor and Amos Adams have thrashed out so long. (Has man a free will, or has the illusion of time and space wound him up in its predestined tangle, to act as he must and be what he is without appeal or resistance, or even hope of a pardon?)

Doctor Nesbit and Amos Adams were trying to solve the mystery of human destiny at the gate of the Adams' home the day after the funeral. Amos had his foot on the hub of the Doctor's buggy and was saying: "But Doctor, can't you see that it isn't all material? Suppose that every atom of the universe does affect every other atom, and that the accumulated effect of past action holds the stars in their courses, and that if we knew what all the past was we should be able to foretell the future, because it would be mathematically calculable—what of it? That does not prove your case, man! Can't you see that in free will another element enters—the spiritual, if you please, that is not amenable to atomic action past or present?" Amos smiled deprecatingly and added sadly: "Got that last night from Schopenhauer." The Doctor, clearly unawed by Schopenhauer, broke out: "Aye, there I have you, Amos. Isn't the brain matter, and doesn't the brain secrete consciousness?"

"Does this buggy secrete distance, Jim? Go 'long with you, man." Before the Doctor could reply, around the corner of the house, bringing little Kenyon Adams in his best bib and tucker, came the lofty figure of Mrs. Nesbit. With her came her daughter. Then up spoke Mrs. Bedelia Satterthwaite Nesbit of the Maryland Satterthwaites, "Look here, Amos Adams—I don't care what you say, I'm going to take this baby." There was strong emphasis upon the "I'm," and she went on: "You can have him every night, and Grant can take care of the child after supper when he comes home from work. But every morning at eight I'm going to have this baby." Further emphasis upon the first person. "I'm not going to see a child turned over to a hired girl all day and me with a big house and no baby and a daughter about to marry and leave me and a houseful of

help, if I needed it, which thank Heavens I don't." She put her lips together sternly, and, "Not a word, Amos Adams," she said to Amos, who had not opened his mouth. "Not another word. Kenyon will be home at six o'clock."

She put the child into the Doctor's submissive arms—helped her daughter into the buggy, and when she had climbed in herself, she glared triumphantly over her glasses and above her Roman nose, as she said: "Now, Amos—have some sense. Doctor,—go on." And in a moment the buggy was spinning up the hill toward the town.

Thus it was that every day, rain or shine, until the day of her wedding, Laura Nesbit drove her dog cart to the Adamses before the men went to their work and took little Kenyon home with her and brought him back in the evening. And always she took him from the arms of Grant—Grant, redheaded, freckled, blue-eyed, who was hardening into manhood and premature maturity so fast that he did not realize the change that it made in his face. It grew set, but not hard, a woman's tenderness crept into the features, and with that tenderness came at times a look of petulant impatience. It was a sad face—a sadly fanatic face—yet one that lighted with human feeling under a smile.

Little by little, meeting daily—often meeting morning and evening, Grant and Laura established a homely, wholesome, comfortable relation.

One evening while Laura was waiting for Tom Van Dorn and Grant was waiting for Kenyon she and Grant sitting upon the veranda steps of the Nesbit home, looked into the serene, wide lawn that topped the hill above the quiet town. They could look across the white and green of the trees and houses, across the prosperous, solid, red roofs of the stone and brick stores and offices on Market Street, into the black smudge of smoke and the gray, unpainted, sprawling rows of ill-kept tenements around the coal mines, that was South Harvey. They could see even then the sky stains far down the Wahoo Valley, where the villages of Foley and Magnus rose and duplicated the ugliness of South Harvey.

The drift of the conversation was personal. The thoughts of youth are largely personal. The universe is measured by one's own thumb in the twenties. "Funny, isn't it," said

Grant, playing with a honeysuckle vine that climbed the post beside him, "I guess I'm the only one of the old crowd who is outlawed in overalls. There's Freddie Kollander and Nate Perry and cousin Morty and little Joe Calvin, all up town counterjumping or working in offices. The girls all getting married." He paused. "But as far as that goes I'm making more money than any of the fellows!" He paused again a moment and added as he gazed moodily into the pillars of smoke rising above South Harvey, "Gee, but I'll miss you when you're gone—"

The girl's silvery laugh greeted his words. "Now, Grant," she said, "where do you think I'm going? Why, Tom and I will be only a block from here—just over on Tenth Street in the Perry House."

Grant grinned as he shook his head. "You're lost and gone forever, just the same, Miss Clementine. In about three years I'll probably be that 'red-headed boss carpenter in the mine—let me see, what's his name?' "

"Oh, Grant," scoffed the girl. She saw that his heart was sadder than his face.

She took courage and said: "Grant, you never can know how often I think of you—how much I want you to win everything worth while in this world, how much I want you to be happy—how I believe in you and—and—bet on you, Grant—bet on you!"

Grant did not answer her. Presently he looked up and over the broad valley below them. The sun behind the house was touching the limestone ledge far across the valley with golden rays. The smoke from South Harvey on their right was lighted also. The youth looked into the smoke. Then he turned his eyes back from the glowing smoke and spoke.

"This is how I look at it. I don't mean you're any different from any one else. What I was trying to say was that I'm the only one of our old crowd in the High School you know that used to have parties and go together in the old days—I'm the only one that's wearing overalls, and my way is down there"; he nodded his head toward the mines and smelters and factories in the valley.

"Look at these hands," he said, solemnly spreading out

his wide, muscular hands on his knees; showing one bruised blue-black finger nail. The hands were flinty and hairy and brown, but they looked effective with an intelligence almost apart from the body which they served.

"I'm cut out for work. It's all right. That's my job, and I'm proud of it so far as that goes. I could get a place clerking if I wanted to, and be in the dancing crowd in six months, and be out to the Van Dorns for dinner in a year." He paused and looked into the distant valley and cried. "But I tell you—my job is down there. And I'm not going to quit them. God knows they're getting the rough end of it. If you knew," his voice raised slightly and a petulant indignation tempered it. "If you knew the gouging and pocket picking and meanness that is done by the people up town to the people down there in the smoke, you'd be one of those howling red-mouthed anarchists you read about."

The girl looked at him silently and at length asked: "For instance—what's just one thing?"

"Well, for instance—in the mines where I work all the men come up grimy and greasy and vile. They have to wash. In Europe we roughnecks know that wash-houses are provided by the company, but here," he cried excitedly, "the company doesn't provide even a faucet; instead the men—father and son and maybe a boarder or two have to go home—into those little one and two roomed houses the company has built, and strip to the hide with the house full of children and wash. What if your girlhood had been used to seeing things like that—could you laugh as you laugh now?" He looked up at her savagely. "Oh, I know they're ignorant foreigners and little better than animals and those things don't hurt them—only if you had a little girl who had to be in and out of the single room of your home when the men came home to wash up—"

He broke off, and then began again, "Why, I was talking to a dago last night at the shaft mouth going down to work on the graveyard shift and he said that he came here believing he would find a free, beautiful country in which his children could grow up self-respecting men and women, and then he told me about his little girls living down there

where all the vice is scattered through the tenements, and—about this washing up proposition, and now one of the girls is gone and they can't find her." He threw out a despairing hand; "So I'm a roughneck, Laura—I'm a jay, and I'm going to stay with them."

"But your people," she urged. "What about them—your father and brothers?"

"Jap's climbing out. Father's too old to get in. And Kenyon—" he flinched, "I hope to God I'll have the nerve to stay when the test on him comes." He turned to the girl passionately: "But you—you—oh, you—I want you to know—" He did not finish the sentence, but rose and walked into the house and called: "Dad—Kenyon—come on, it's getting late. Stars are coming out."

Half an hour later Tom Van Dorn, in white flannels, with a red silk tie, and with a white hat and shoes, came striding across the lawn. His black silky mustache, his soft black hair, his olive skin, his shining black eyes, his alert emotional face, dark and swarthy, was heightened even in the twilight by the soft white clothes he wore.

"Hello, popper-in-law," he cried. "Any room left on the veranda?"

"Come in, Thomas," piped the older man. "The girls are doing the dishes, Bedelia and Laura, and we'll just sit out two or three dances."

The young man lolled in the hammock shaded by the vines. The elder smoked and reflected. Then slowly and by degrees, as men who are feeling their way to conversation, they began talking of local politics. They were going at a high rate when the talk turned to Henry Fenn. "Doing pretty well, Doctor," put in the younger man. "Only broke over once in eighteen months—that's the record for Henry. Shows what a woman can do for a man." He looked up sympathetically, and caught the Doctor's curious eyes.

The Doctor puffed, cleaned out his pipe, absently put it away, then rose and deliberately pulled his chair over to the hammock: "Tom—I'm a generation older than you—nearly. I want to tell you something—" He smiled. "Boy—you've got the devil's own fight ahead of you—did

you know it—I mean," he paused, "the—well, the woman proposition."

Van Dorn fingered his mustache, and looked serious.

"Tom," the elder man chirped, "you're a handsome pup—a damn handsome, lovable pup. Sometimes." He let his voice run whimsically into its mocking falsetto, "I almost catch myself getting fooled too."

They laughed.

"Boy, the thing's in your blood. Did you realize that you've got just as hard a fight as poor Henry Fenn? It's all right now—for a while; but the time will come—we might just as well look this thing squarely in the face now, Tom—the time will come in a few years when the devil will build the same kind of a fire under you he is building under Henry Fenn—only it won't be whisky; it will be the woman proposition. Damn it, boy," cried the elder man squeakily, "it's in your blood; you've let it grow in your very blood. I've known you ten years now, and I've seen it grow. Tom—when the time comes, can you stand up and fight like Henry Fenn—can you, Tom? And will you?" he cried with a piteous fierceness that stirred all the sympathy in the young man's heart.

He rose to the height of the Doctor's passion. Tears came into Van Dorn's bright eyes. His breast expanded emotionally and he exclaimed: "I know what I am, oh, I know it. But for her—you and I together—you'll help and we'll stand together and fight it out for her." The father looked at the mobile features of his companion, and sensed the thin plating of emotion under the vain voice. Whereupon the Doctor heaved a deep, troubled sigh.

"Heigh-ho, heigh-ho." He put his arm upon the broad, handsome, young shoulder. "But you'll try to be a good boy, won't you—" he repeated. "Just try hard to be a good boy, Tom—that's all any of us can do," and turning away he whistled into the house and a girlish trill answered him.

After the Doctor had jogged down the hill behind his old horse making his evening professional visits, Mrs. Nesbit came out and made a show of sitting with the young people for a time. And not until she left did they go into those things that were near their hearts.

When Mrs. Nesbit left the veranda the young man moved over to the girl and she asked: "Tom, I wonder—oh, so much and so often—about the soul of us and the body of us—about the justice of things." She was speaking out of the heart that Grant had touched to the quick with his outburst about the poor. But Tom Van Dorn could not know what was moving within her and if he had known, perhaps he would have had small sympathy with her feeling. Then she said: "Oh, Tom, Tom, tell me—don't you suppose that our souls pay for the bodies that we crush—I mean all of us—all of us—every one in the world?"

The man looked at her blankly. Then he put his arm tenderly about her and answered: "I don't know about our souls—much—" He kissed her. "But I do know about you—your wonderful eyes—and your magic hair, and your soft cheek!" He left her in no doubt as to her lover's mood.

Vaguely the girl felt unsatisfied with his words. Not that she doubted the truth of them; but as she drew back from him she said softly: "But if I were not beautiful, what then?"

"Ah, but you are—you are; in all the world there is not another like you for me." In the rapture that followed, her soul grew in a wave of joy, yet she spoke shyly.

"Tom," she said wistfully, "how can you fail to see it—this great, beautiful truth that makes me so glad: That the miracle of our love proves God."

He caressed her hands and pressed closer to her. "Call it what you will, little girl: God if it pleases you, I call it nature."

"Oh, it's bigger than that, Tom," and she shook a stubborn Satterthwaite head, "and it makes me so happy and makes me so humble that I want to share it with all the world." She laid an abashed cheek on his hands that were still fondling hers.

But young Mr. Van Dorn spoke up manfully, "Well, don't you try sharing it. I want all of it, every bit of it." He played with her hair, and relaxed in a languor of complete possession of her.

"Doesn't love," she questioned, "lift you? Doesn't it make you love every living thing?" she urged.

"I love only you—only you in all the world—your eyes thrill me; when your body is near I am mad with delight; when I touch you I am in heaven. When I close my eyes before the jury I see you and I put the bliss of my vision into my voice, and," he clinched his hands, "all the devils of hell couldn't win that jury away from me. You spur me to my best, put springs in every muscle, put power in my blood."

"But, Tom, tell me this?" Still wistfully, she came close to him, and put her chin on her clasped hands that rested on his shoulder. "Love makes me want to be so good, so loyal, so brave, so kind—isn't it that way with you? Isn't love the miracle that brings the soul out into the world through the senses." She did not wait for his answer. She clasped her hands tighter on his shoulder. "I feel that I'm literally stealing when I have a single thought that I do not bring to you. In every thrill of my heart about the humblest thing, I find joy in knowing that we shall enjoy it together. Let me tell you something. Grant Adams and his father were here to-day for dinner. Well, you know Grant is in a kind of obsession of love for that little motherless child Mrs. Adams left; Grant mothers him and fathers him and literally loves him to distraction. And Grant's growing so manly, and so loyal and so strong in the love of that little boy—he doesn't realize it; but I can see it in him. Oh, Tom, can you see it in me?"

Before her mood had changed she told him all that Grant Adams had said; and her voice broke when she retold the Italian's story. Tears were in her eyes when she finished. And young Mr. Van Dorn was emotionally touched also, but not in sympathy with the story the girl was telling. She ended it:

"And then I looked at Grant's big rough hands—bony and hairy, and Tom, they told me the whole story of his destiny; just as your soft, effective, gentle white hands prophesy our destiny. Oh, why—why—I am beginning to wonder why, Tom, why things must be so. Why do some

of us have to do all the world's rough, hard, soul-killing work, and others of us have lives that are beautiful, aspiring, glorious? How can we let such injustices be, and not try to undo them!"

In his face an indignation was rising which she could not comprehend. Finally he found words to say:

"So that's what that Adams boy is putting in your head! Why do you want to bother with such nonsense?"

But the girl stopped him: "Tom, it's not nonsense. They do work and dig and grind down there in a way which we up here know nothing about. It's real—this—this miserable unfair way things are done in the world. O my dear, my dear, it's because I love you so, it's because I know now what love really is that it hurts to see—" He took her face in his hands caressingly, and tried to put an added tenderness into his voice that his affection might blunt the sharpness of his words.

"Well, it's nonsense I tell you! Look here, Laura, if there is a God, he's put those dagos and ignorant foreigners down there to work; just as he's put the fish in the sea to be caught, and the beasts of the field to be eaten, and it's none of my business to ask why! My job is myself—myself and you! I refuse to bear burdens for people. I love you with all the intensity of my nature—but it's my nature —not human nature—not any common, socialized, diluted love; it's individual and it's forever between you and me! What do I care for the rest of the world! And if you love me as you will some day, you'll love me so that they can't set you off mooning about other people's troubles. I tell you, Laura, I'm going to make you love me so you can't think of anything day or night but me—and what I am to you! That's my idea of love! It's individual, intimate, restricted, qualified and absolutely personal—and some day you'll see that!"

As he tripped down the hill from the Nesbit home that spring night, he wondered what Laura Nesbit meant when she spoke of Grant Adams, and his love for the motherless baby. The idea that this love bore any sort of resemblance to the love of educated, cultivated people as found in the love that Laura and her intended husband bore toward each

other, puzzled the young lawyer. Being restless, he turned off his homeward route, and walked under the freshly leaved trees. Over and over again the foolish phrases and sentences from Laura Nesbit's love making, many other nights in which she seemed to assume the unquestioned truth of the hypothesis of God, also puzzled him. Whatever his books had taught him, and whatever life had taught him, convinced him that God was a polite word for explaining one's failure. Yet, here was a woman whose mind he had to respect, using the term as a proved theorem. He looked at the stars, wheeling about with the monstrous pulleys of gravitation and attraction, and the certain laws of motion. A moment later he looked southward in the sky to that flaming, raging, splotched patch where the blue and green and yellow flames from the smelters and the belching black smoke from the factories hid the low-hanging stars and marked the seething hell of injustice and vice and want and woe that he knew was in South Harvey, and he held the glowing cigarette stub in his hand and laughed when he thought of God.

"Free will," says "Mr. Left" in one of his rather hazy and unconvincing observations, "is of limited range. Man faces two buttons. He must choose the material or the spiritual—and when he has chosen fate plays upon his choice the grotesque variation of human destiny. But when the cloth of life is finished, the pattern of the passing events may be the same in either choice, riches or poverty, misery or power, only the color of the cloth differs; in one piece, however rich, the pattern is drab with despair, the other cloth sheens in happiness." Which Mr. Van Dorn in later life, reading the *Psychological Journal,* turned back to a second time, and threw aside with a casual and unappreciative, "Oh hell," as his only comment.

CHAPTER XII

IN WHICH WE LEARN THAT LOVE IS THE LEVER THAT MOVES THE WORLD

MRS. NESBIT tried to put the Doctor into his Sunday blacks the day of her daughter's wedding, but he would have none of them. He appeared on Market Street and went his rounds among the sick in his linen clothes with his Panama hat and his pleated white shirt. He did not propose to have the visiting princes, political and commercial, who had been summoned to honor the occasion, find him in his suzerainty without the insignia of his power. For it was "Old Linen Pants," not Dr. James Nesbit, who was the boss of the northern district and a member of the State's triumvirate. So the Doctor in the phaëton, drawn by his amiable, motherly, sorrel mare, the Doctor, white and resplendent in a suit that shimmered in the hot June sun, flaxed around town, from his office to the hotel, from the hotel to the bank, from the bank to South Harvey. As a part of the day's work he did the honors of the town, soothed the woes of the weary, healed the sick, closed a dying man's eyes, held a mother's hands away from death as she brought life into the world, made a governor, paid his overdue note, got a laborer work, gave a lift to a fallen woman, made two casual purchases: a councilman and a new silk vest, with cash in hand; lent a drunkard's wife the money for a sack of flour, showed three Maryland Satterthwaites where to fish for bass in the Wahoo, took four Schenectady Van Dorns out to lunch, and was everywhere at once doing everything, clicking his cane, whistling gently or humming a low, crooning tune, smiling for the most part, keeping his own counsel and exhibiting no more in his face of what was in his heart than the pink and dimpled back of a six-months' baby.

To say that the Doctor was everywhere in Harvey is inexact. He was everywhere except on Quality Hill in Elm

Street. There, from the big, bulging house with its towers and minarets and bow windows and lean-tos, ells and additions, the Doctor was barred. There was chaos, and the spirit that breathed on the face of the waters was the Harvey representative of the Maryland Satterthwaites, with her crimping pins bristling like miniature gun barrels, and with the look of command upon her face, giving orders in a firm, cool voice and then executing the orders herself before any one else could turn around. She could call the spirits from the vasty deep of the front hall or the back porch and they came, or she knew the reason why. With an imperial wave of her hand she sent her daughter off to some social wilderness of monkeys with all the female Satterthwaites and Van Dorns and Mrs. Senators and Miss Governors and Misses Congressmen, and with the offices of Mrs. John Dexter, Mrs. Herdicker, the ladies' hatter, and two Senegambian slaveys, Mrs. Nesbit brought order out of what at one o'clock seemed without form and void.

It was late in the afternoon, almost evening, though the sun still was high enough in the heavens to throw cloud shadows upon the hills across the valley when the Doctor stabled his mare and came edging into the house from the barn. He could hear the clamor of many voices; for the Maryland Satterthwaites had come home from the afternoon's festivity. He slipped into his office-study, and as it was stuffy there he opened the side door that let out upon the veranda. He sat alone behind the vines, not wishing to be a part of the milling in the rooms. His heart was heavy. He blinked and sighed and looked across the valley, and crooned his old-fashioned tune while he tried to remember all of the life of the little girl who had come out of the mystery of birth into his life when Elm Street was a pair of furrows on a barren, wind-swept prairie hill; tried to remember how she had romped in girlhood under the wide sunshine in the prairie grass, how her little playhouse had sat where the new dining-room now stood, how her dolls used to litter the narrow porch that grew into the winding, serpentine veranda that belted the house, how she read his books, how she went about with him on his daily rounds, and how she had suddenly bloomed into a womanhood that

made him feel shy and abashed in her presence. He wondered where it was upon the way that he had lost clasp of her hand: where did it drop from him? How did the little fingers that he used to hold so tightly, slip into another's hand? Her life's great decision had been made without consulting him; when did he lose her confidence? She had gone her way an independent soul—flown like a bird from the cage, he thought, and was going a way that he felt would be a way of pain, and probably sorrow, yet he could not stop her. All the experience of his life was worthless to her. All that he knew of men, all that he feared of her lover, were as chaff in the scales for her.

The Doctor, the boss, the friend, the man, withdrew from his consciousness as he sat behind the vines and he became the impersonal, universal father, wondering at the mystery of life. As he sat musing, he heard a step behind him, and saw his daughter coming across the porch to greet him. "Father," she said, "I have just this half hour that's to be ours. I've planned for it all day. Mother has promised to keep every one away."

The father's jaw began to tremble and his cherubic face to wrinkle in an emotional pucker. He put the girl's arm about his neck, and rubbed her hand upon his cheek. Then the father said softly:

"I never felt poor before until this minute." The girl looked inquiringly at him and was about to protest. He stopped her: "Money wouldn't do you much good—not all the money in the world."

"Well, father, I don't want money: we don't need it," said the girl. "Why, we have a beautiful home and Tom is making—"

"It's not that, my dear—not that." He played with her hand a moment longer. "I feel that I ought to give you something better than money; my—my—well, my view of life—what they call philosophy of life. It's the accumulation of fifty years of living." He fumbled in his pocket for his pipe. "Let me smoke, and maybe I can talk."

"Laura—girl—" He puffed bashfully in a pause, and began again: "There's a lot of Indiana—real common Eendiany," he mocked, "about your father, and I just some

way can't talk under pressure." He caressed the girl's hand and pulled at his pipe as one giving birth to a system of philosophy. Yet he was dumb as he sat before the warm glow of the passing torch of life which was shining from his daughter's face. Finally he burst forth, piping impatience at his own embarrassment.

"I tell you, daughter, it's just naturally hell to be pore." The girl saw his twitching mouth and the impotence of his swimming eyes; but before she could protest he checked her.

"Pore! Pore!" he repeated hopelessly. "Why, if we had a million, I would still be just common, ornery, doless pore folks—tongue-tied and helpless, and I couldn't give you nothin'—nothin!" he cried, "but just rubbish! Yet there are so many things I'd like to give you, Laura—so many, many things!" he repeated. "God Almighty's put a terrible hogtight inheritance tax on experience, girl!" He smiled a crooked, tearful little smile—looked up into her eyes in doglike wistfulness as he continued: "I'd like to give you some of mine—some of the wisdom I've got one way and another—but, Lord, Lord," he wailed, "I can't. The divine inheritance tax bars me." He patted her with one hand, holding his smoldering pipe in the other. Then he shrilled out in the impotence of his pain: "I just must give you this, Laura: Whatever comes and whatever goes—and lots of sad things will come and lots of sad things will go, too, for that matter—always remember this: Happiness is from the heart out—not from the world in! Do you understand, child—do you?"

The girl smiled and petted him, but he saw that he hadn't reached her consciousness. He puffed at a dead pipe a moment, then he cried as he beat his hands together in despair: "I suppose it's no use. It's no use. But you can at least remember these words, Laura, and some time the meaning will get to you. Always carry your happiness under your bonnet! It's the only thing I can give you—out of all my store!"

The girl put her arm about him and pressed closely to him, and they rose, as she said: "Why, father—I understand. Of course I understand. Don't you see I understand, father?"

She spoke eagerly and clasped her arms tighter about the pudgy little figure. They stood quietly a moment, as the father looked earnestly, dog-wise, up into her face, as if trying by his very gaze to transmit his loving wisdom. Then, as he found voice: "No, Laura, probably you'll need fifty years to understand; but look over on the hill across the valley at the moving cloud shadows. They are only shadows—not realities. They are just unrealities that prove the real—just trailing anchors of the sun!" He had pocketed his pipe and his hand came up from his pocket as he waved to the distant shadows and piped: "Trouble—heartaches—all the host of clouds that cover life—are only—only—" he let his voice drop gently as he sighed: "only anchors of the sun; Laura, they only prove—just prove—"

She did not let him finish, but bent to kiss him and she could feel the shudder of a smothered sob rack him as she touched his cheek.

Then he smiled at her and chirped: "Just Eendiany—sis'. Just pore, dumb Eendiany! Hi, ho! Now run and be a good girl! And here's a jim-crack your daddy got you!"

From his pocket he drew out a little package, and dangled a sparkling jewel in his hands. He saw a flash of pleasure on her face. But his heart was full, and he turned away his head as he handed the gift to her. Her eyes were upon the sparkling jewel, as he led her into the house, saying with a great sigh: "Come on, my dear—let's go in."

At nine o'clock that night, the great foundry of a house, with its half a score of chimneys, marking its various epochs of growth, literally was stuffed with smilax, ferns, roses, orange blossoms, and daisy chains. In the mazes of these aisles of verdure, a labyrinth of Van Dorns and Satterthwaites and visiting statesmen with highly powdered womankind was packed securely. George Brotherton, who was born a drum major, wearing all of his glittering insignia of a long line of secret societies, moved as though the welding humanity were fluid. He had presided at too many funerals not to know the vast importance of keeping the bride's kin from the groom's kin, and when he saw that they were ushered into the wedding supper, in due form and order,

it was with the fine abandon of a grand duke lording it over the populace. Senators, Supreme Court justices, proud Satterthwaites, haughty Van Dorns, Congressmen, governors, local gentry, were packed neatly but firmly in their proper boxes

The old families of Harvey—Captain Morton and his little flock, the Kollanders, Ahab Wright with his flaring sidewhiskers, his white necktie and his shadow of a wife; Joseph Calvin and his daughter in pigtails, Mrs. Calvin having written Mrs. Nesbit that it seemed that she just never did get to go anywhere and be anybody, having said as much and more to Mr. Calvin with emphasis; Mrs. Brotherton, mother of George, beaming with pride at her son's part; stuttering Kyle Perry and his hatchet-faced son, the Adamses all starched for the occasion, Daniel Sands, a widower pro tem. with a broadening interest in school teachers, Mrs. Herdicker, the ladies' hatter, classifying the Satterthwaites and the Van Dorns according to the millinery of their womenkind; Morty Sands wearing the first white silk vest exhibited in Harvey and making violent eyes at a daughter of the railroad aristocracy—either a general manager's daughter or a general superintendent's, and for the life of her Mrs. Nesbit couldn't say; for she had not the highest opinion in the world of the railroad aristocracy, but took them, president, first, second and third vice, general managers, ticket and passenger agents, and superintendents, as a sort of social job-lot because they came in private cars, and the Doctor desired them, to add to his trophies of the occasion,—Henry Fenn, wearing soberly the suit in which he appeared when he rode the skyrocket, and forming part of the bridal chorus, stationed in the cigar-box of a sewing-room on the second floor to sing, "Oh, Day So Dear," as the happy couple came down the stairs—the old families of Harvey were all invited to the wedding. And the old and the new and most of the intermediary families of no particular caste or standing, came to the reception after the ceremony. But because she had the best voice in town, Margaret Müller sang "Oh, Promise Me," in a remote bedroom—to give the effect of distant music, low and sweet, and after that song was over, and after Henry Fenn's great

pride had been fairly sated, Margaret Müller mingled with the guests and knew more of the names and stations of the visiting nobility from the state house and railroad offices than any other person present. And such is the perversity of the male sex that there were more "by Georges," and more "Look—look, looks," and more faint whistles, and more "Tch—tch tchs," and more nudging and pointing among the men when Margaret appeared than when the bride herself, pink and white and beautiful, came down the stairs. Even the eyes of the groom, as he stood beside the bride, tall, youthful, strong, and handsome as a man may dare to be and earn an honest living, even his eyes sometimes found themselves straying toward the figure and face of the beautiful girl whom he had scarcely noticed while she worked in the court house. But this may be said for the groom, that when his eyes did wander, he pulled them back with an almost irritated jerk, and seemed determined to keep them upon the girl by his side.

As for the wedding ceremony itself—it was like all others. The women looked exultant, and the men—the groom, the bride's father, the groomsmen, and even Rev. John Dexter, had a sort of captured look and went through the service as though they wished that marriages which are made in Heaven were celebrated there also. But after the service was actually accomplished, after the bride and groom had been properly congratulated, after the multitude had been fed in serried ranks according to social precedence, after the band on the lawn outside had serenaded the happy couple, and after further interminable handshaking and congratulations, from those outside, after the long line of invited guests had filed past the imposing vista of pickle dishes, cutlery, butter dishes and cake plates, reaching around the walls of three bedrooms,—to say nothing of an elaborate wax representation of nesting cupids bearing the card of the Belgian Society from the glass works and sent, according to the card, to "Mlle. Lille'n'en Pense"; after the carriage, bedecked and bedizened with rice and shoes and ribbons, that was supposed to bear away the bride and groom, had gone amid the shouting and the tumult of the populace, and after the phaëton and the sorrel mare had

actually taken the bride and groom from the barn to the railway station, after the fiddle and the bassoon and the horn and the tinkling cymbal at Morty Sands's dance had frayed and torn the sleep of those pale souls who would sleep on such a night in Harvey, Grant Adams and his father, leaving Jasper to trip whatever fantastic toes he might have, in the opera house, drove down the hill through the glare of the furnaces, the creaking of the oil derricks and the smell of the straw paper mill through the heart of South Harvey.

They made little talk as they rode. Their way led them through the street which is shaded and ashamed by day, and which glows and flaunts itself by night. Men and women, gambling, drinking, carousing, rioted through the street, in and out of doors that spilled puddles of yellow light on the board sidewalks and dirt streets; screaming laughter, hoarse calls, the stench of liquor, the muffled noises of gambling, sputter of electric lights and the flash of glimmering reflections from bar mirrors rasped their senses and kept the father and son silent as they rode. When they had passed into the slumbering tenements, the father spoke: "Well, son, here it is—the two kinds of playing, and here we have what they call the bad people playing. The Van Dorns and the Satterthwaites will tell you that vice is the recreation of the poor. And it's more or less true." The elder man scratched his beard and faced the stars: "It's a devilish puzzle. Character makes happiness; I've got that down fine. But what makes character? Why is vice the recreation of the poor? Why do we recruit most of our bad boys and all of our wayward girls from those neighborhoods in every city where the poor live? Why does the clerk on $12 a week uptown crowd into Doctor Jim's wedding party, and the glass blower at $4 a day down here crowd into 'Big Em's' and 'Joe's Place' and the 'Crescent'? Is poverty caused by vice; or is vice a symptom of poverty? And why does the clerk's wife move in 'our best circles' and the miner's wife, with exactly the same money to spend, live in outer social darkness?"

"I've asked myself that question lots of times," exclaimed the youth. "I can't make it work out on any

theory. But I tell you, father," the son clinched the hand that was free from the lines, and shook it, "it's wrong—some way, somehow, it's wrong, way down at the bottom of things—I don't know how nor why—but as sure as I live, I'll try to find out."

The clang of an engine bell in the South Harvey railroad yards drowned the son's answer. The two were crossing the track and turning the corner that led to the South Harvey station. The midnight train was about due. As the buggy came near the little gray box of a station a voice called, "Adams—Adams," and a woman's voice, "Oh, Grant."

"Why," exclaimed the father, "it's the happy couple." Grant stopped the horse and climbed out over the sleeping body of little Kenyon. "In a moment," replied Grant. Then he came to a shadow under the station eaves and saw the young people hiding. "Adams, you can help us," said Van Dorn. "We slipped off in the Doctor's phaëton, to get away from the guying crowd and we have tried to get the house on the 'phone, and in some way they don't answer. The horse is tied over by the lumber yard there. Will you take it home with you to-night, and deliver it to the Doctor in the morning—whatever—" But Grant cut in:

"Why, of course. Glad to have the chance." He was awkward and ill at ease, and repeated, "Why, of course, anything." But Van Dorn interjected: "You understand, I'll pay for it—" Grant Adams stared at him. "Why—why—no—" stammered Grant in confusion, while Van Dorn thrust a five-dollar bill upon him. He tried to return it, but the bride and groom ran to the train, leaving the young man alone and hurt in his heart. The father from the buggy saw what had happened. In a few minutes they were leading the Doctor's horse behind the Adams buggy. "I didn't want their money," exclaimed Grant, "I wanted their—their—"

"You wanted their friendship, Grant—that's what you wanted," said the father.

"And he wanted a hired man," cried Grant. "Just a hired man, and she—why, didn't she understand? She knew I would have carried the old horse on my back clear

to town, if she'd let me, just to hear her laugh once. Father," the son's voice was bitter as he spoke, "why didn't she understand—why did she side with him?"

The father smiled. "Perhaps, on your wedding trip, Grant, your wife will agree with you too, son."

As they rode home in silence, the young man asked himself over and over again, what lines divided the world into classes; why manual toil shuts off the toilers from those who serve the world otherwise. Youth is sensitive; often it is supersensitive, and Grant Adams saw or thought he saw in the little byplay of Tom Van Dorn the caste prod of society jabbing labor back into its place.

"Tom," said the bride as they watched Grant Adams unhitch the horse by the lumber yard, "why did you force that money on Grant—he would have much preferred to have your hand when he said good-by."

"He's not my kind of folks, Laura," replied Van Dorn. "I know you like him. But that five will do him lots more good than my shaking his hand, and if that youth wasn't as proud as Lucifer he'd rather have five dollars than any man's hand. I would—if it comes to that."

"But, Tom," answered the girl, "that wasn't pride, that was self-respect."

"Well, my dear," he squeezed her gloved hand and in the darkness put his arm about her, "let's not worry about him. All I know is that I wanted to square it with him for taking care of the horse and five dollars won't hurt his self-respect. And," said the bridegroom as he pressed the bride very close to his heart, "what is it to us? We have each other, so what do we care—what is all the world to us?"

As the midnight train whistled out of South Harvey Grant Adams sitting on a bedside was fondly unbuttoning a small body from its clothes, ready to hear a sleepy child's voice say its evening prayers. In his heart there flamed the love for the child that was beckoning him into love for every sentient thing. And as Laura Van Dorn, bride of Thomas of that name, heard the whistle, her being was flooded with a love high and marvelous, washing in from the infinite love that moves the universe and carrying her soul in aspiring

thrills of joy out to ride upon the mysterious currents that we know are not of ourselves, and so have called divine.

In the morning, in the early gray of morning, when Grant Adams rose to make the fire for breakfast, he found his father, sitting by the kitchen table, half clad as he had risen from a restless bed. Scrawled sheets of white paper lay around him on the floor and the table. He said sadly:

"She can't come, Grant—she can't come. I dreamed of her last night; it was all so real—just as she was when we were young, and I thought—I was sure she was near." He sighed as he leaned back in his chair. "But they've looked for her—all of them have looked for her. She knows I'm calling—but she can't come." The father fumbled the papers, rubbed his gray beard, and shut his fine eyes as he shook his head, and whispered: "What holds her—what keeps her? They all come but her."

"What's this, father?" asked Grant, as a page closely written in a fine hand fluttered to the floor.

"Oh, nothing—much—just Mr. Left bringing me some message from Victor Hugo. It isn't much."

But the Eminent Authority who put it into the Proceedings of the Psychological Society laid more store by it than he did by the scraps and incoherent bits of jargon which pictured the old man's lonely grief. They are not preserved for us, but in the Proceedings, on page 1125, we have this from Mr. Left:

"The vice of the poor is crass and palpable. It carries a quick and deadly corrective poison. But the vices of the well-to-do are none the less deadly. To dine in comfort and know your brother is starving; to sleep in peace and know that he is wronged and oppressed by laws that we sanction, to gather one's family in contentment around a hearth, while the poor dwell in a habitat of vice that kills their souls, to live without bleeding hearts for the wrong on this earth—that is the vice of the well-to-do. And so it shall come to pass that when the day of reckoning appears it shall be a day of wrath. For when God gives the poor the strength to rise (and they are waxing stronger every hour), they will meet not a brother's hand but a glutton's—the hard, dead hand of a hard, dead soul. Then will the vicious poor and the

vicious well-to-do, each crippled by his own vices, the blind leading the blind, fall to in a merciless conflict, mad and meaningless, born of a sad, unnecessary hate that shall terrorize the earth, unless God sends us another miracle of love like Christ or some vast chastening scourge of war, to turn aside the fateful blow."

CHAPTER XIII

IN WHICH WE OBSERVE THE INTERIOR OF A DESERTED HOUSE

AN empty, lonely house was that on Quality Hill in Elm Street after the daughter's marriage. It was not that the Doctor and Mrs. Nesbit did not see their daughter often; but whether she came every day or twice a week or every week, always she came as a visitor. No one may have two homes. And the daughter of the house of Nesbit had her own home—a home wherein she was striving to bind her husband to a domesticity which in itself did not interest him. But with her added charm to it, she believed that she could lure him into an acceptance of her ideal of marriage. So with all her powers she fell to her task. Consciously or unconsciously, directly or by indirection, but always with the joy of adventure in her heart, whether with books or with music or with comradeship, she was bending herself to the business of wifehood, so that her own home filled her life and the Nesbit home was lonely; so lonely was it that by way of solace and diversion, Mrs. Nesbit had all the woodwork downstairs "done over" in quarter-sawed oak with elaborate carvings. Ferocious gargoyles, highly excited dolphins, improper, pot-bellied little cupids, and mermaids without a shred of character, seemed about to pounce out from banister, alcove, bookcase, cozy corner and china closet.

George Brotherton pretended to find resemblances in the effigies to people about Harvey, and to the town's echoing delight he began to name the figures after their friends, and always saluted the figures intimately, as Maggie, or Henry, or the Captain, or John Kollander, or Lady Herdicker. But through the wooden menagerie in the big house the Doctor whistled and hummed and smoked and chirruped more or less drearily. To him the Japanese screens, the huge blue vases, the ponderous high-backed chairs crawly

with meaningless carvings, the mantels full of jars and pots and statuettes, brought no comfort. He was forever putting his cane over his arm and clicking down the street to the Van Dorn home; but he felt in spite of all his daughter's efforts to welcome him—and perhaps because of them—that he was a stranger there. So slowly and rather imperceptibly to him, certainly without any conscious desire for it, a fondness for Kenyon Adams sprang up in the Doctor's heart. For it was exceedingly soft in spots and those spots were near his home. He was domestic and he was fond of home joys. So when Mrs. Nesbit put aside the encyclopedia, from which she was getting the awful truth about Babylonian Art for her paper to be read before the Shakespeare Club, and going to the piano, brought from the bottom of a pile of yellow music a tattered sheet, played a Chopin nocturne in a rolling and rather grand style that young women affected before the Civil War, the Doctor's joy was scarcely less keen than the child's. Then came rare occasions when Laura, being there for the night while her husband was away on business, would play melodies that cut the child's heart to the quick and brought tears of joy to his big eyes. It seemed to him at those times as if Heaven itself were opened for him, and for days the melodies she played would come ringing through his heart. Often he would sit absorbed at the piano when he should have been practicing his lesson, picking out those melodies and trying with a poignant yearning for perfection to find their proper harmonies. But at such times after he had frittered away a few minutes, Mrs. Nesbit would call down to him, "You, Kenyon," and he would sigh and take up his scales and runs and arpeggios.

Kenyon was developing into a shy, lovely child of few noises; he seemed to love to listen to every continuous sound—a creaking gate, a waterdrip from the eaves, a whistling wind—a humming wire. Sometimes the Doctor would watch Kenyon long minutes, as the child listened to the fire's low murmur in the grate, and would wonder what the little fellow made of it all. But above everything else about the child the Doctor was interested in watching his eyes develop into the great, liquid, soulful orbs that marked his mother.

To the Doctor the resemblance was rather weird. But he could see no other point in the child's body or mind or soul whereon Margaret Müller had left a token. The Doctor liked to discuss Kenyon with his wife from the standpoint of ancestry. He took a sort of fiendish delight—if one may imagine a fiend with a seraphic face and dancing blue eyes and a mouth that loved to pucker in a pensive whistle—in Mrs. Nesbit's never failing stumble over the child's eyes.

Any evening he would lay aside his Browning—even in a knotty passage wherein the Doctor was wont to take much pleasure, and revert to type thus:

"Yes, I guess there's something in blood as you say! The child shows it! But where do you suppose he gets those eyes?" His wife would answer energetically, "They aren't like Amos's and they certainly are not much like Mary's! Yet those eyes show that somewhere in the line there was fine blood and high breeding."

And the Doctor, remembering the kraut-peddling Müller, who used to live back in Indiana, and who was Kenyon's great-grandfather, would shake a wise head and answer:

"Them eyes is certainly a throw-back to the angel choir, my dear—a sure and certain throw-back!"

And while Mrs. Nesbit was climbing the Sands family tree, from Mary Adams back to certain Irish Sandses of the late eighteenth century, the Doctor would flit back to "Paracelsus," to be awakened from its spell by: "Only the Irish have such eyes! They are the mark of the Celt all over the world! But it's curious that neither Mary nor Daniel had those eyes!"

"It's certainly curious like," squeaked the Doctor amicably—"certainly curious like, as the treetoad said when he couldn't holler up a rain. But it only proves that blood always tells! Bedelia, there's really nothing so true in this world as blood!"

And Mrs. Nesbit would ask him a moment later what he could find so amusing in "Paracelsus"? She certainly never had found anything but headaches in it.

Yet there came a time when the pudgy little stomach of the Doctor did not shake in merriment. For he also had his

problem of blood to solve. Tom Van Dorn was, after all, the famous Van Dorn baby!

One evening in the late winter as the Doctor was trudging home from a belated call, he saw the light in Brotherton's window marking a yellow bar across the dark street. As he stepped in for a word with Mr. Brotherton about the coming spring city election, he saw quickly that the laugh was in some way on Tom Van Dorn, who rose rather guiltily and hurried out of the shop.

"Seegars on George!" exclaimed Captain Morton; then answered the Doctor's gay, inquiring stare: "Henry bet George a box of Perfectos Tom wouldn't be a year from his wedding asking 'what's her name' when the boys were discussing some girl or other, and they've laid for Tom ever since and got him to-night, eh?"

The Captain laughed, and then remembering the Doctor's relationship with the Van Dorns, colored and tried to cover his blunder with: "Just boys, you know, Doc—just their way."

The Doctor grinned and piped back, "Oh, yes—yes—Cap—I know, boys will be dogs!"

Toddling home that night the Doctor passed the Van Dorn house. He saw through the window the young couple in their living-room. The doctor had a feeling that he could sense the emotions of his daughter's heart. It was as though he could see her trying in vain to fasten the steel grippers of her soul into the heart and life of the man she loved. Over and over the father asked himself if in Tom Van Dorn's heart was any essential loyalty upon which the hooks and bonds of the friendship and fellowship of a home could fasten and hold. The father could see the handsome young face of Van Dorn in the gas light, aflame with the joy of her presence, but Dr. Nesbit realized that it was a passing flame —that in the core of the husband was nothing to which a wife might anchor her life; and as the Doctor clicked his cane on the sidewalk vigorously he whispered to himself: "Peth—peth—nothing in his heart but peth."

A day came when the parents stood watching their daughter as she went down the street through the dusk, after she had kissed them both and told them, and after they had all

said they were very happy over it. But when she was out of sight the hands of the parents met and the Doctor saw fear in Bedelia Nesbit's face for the first time. But neither spoke of the fear. It took its place by the vague uneasiness in their hearts, and two spectral sentinels stood guard over their speech.

Thus their talk came to be of those things which lay remote from their hearts. It was Mrs. Nesbit's habit to read the paper and repeat the news to the Doctor, who sat beside her with a book. He jabbed in comments; she ignored them. Thus: "I see Grant Adams has been made head carpenter for all the Wahoo Fuel Companies mines and properties." To which the Doctor replied: "Grant, my dear, is an unusual young man. He'll have ten regular men under him—and I claim that's fine for a boy in his twenties—with no better show in life than Grant has had." But Mrs. Nesbit had in general a low opinion of the Doctor's estimates of men. She held that no man who came from Indiana and was fooled by men who wore cotton in their ears and were addicted to chilblains, could be trusted in appraising humanity.

So she answered, "Yes," dryly. It was her custom when he began to bestow knighthood upon common clay to divert him with some new and irrelevant subject. "Here's an item in the *Times* this morning I fancy you didn't read. After describing the bride's dress and her beauty, it says, 'And the bride is a daughter of the late H. M. Von Müller, who was an exile from his native land and gave up a large estate and a title because of his participation in the revolution of '48. Miss Müller might properly be called the Countess Von Müller, if she chose to claim her rightful title!'—what is there to that?"

The Doctor threw back his head and chuckled:

"Pennsylvania Dutch for three generations—I knew old Herman Müller's father—before I came West—when he used to sell kraut and cheese around Vincennes before the war, and Herman's grandfather came from Pennsylvania."

"I thought so," sniffed Mrs. Nesbit. And then she added: "Doctor, that girl is a minx."

"Yes, my dear," chirped the Doctor. "Yes, she's a minx;

but this isn't the open season for minxes, so we must let her go. And," he added after a pause, during which he read the wedding notice carefully, "she may put a brace under Henry—the blessed Lord knows Henry will need something, though he's done mighty well for a year—only twice in eighteen months. Poor fellow—poor fellow!" mused the Doctor. Mrs. Nesbit blinked at her husband for a minute in sputtering indignation. Then she exclaimed: "Brace under Henry!" And to make it more emphatic, repeated it and then exploded: "The cat's foot—brace for Henry, indeed—that piece!"

And Mrs. Nesbit stalked out of the room, brought back a little dress—a very minute dress—she was making and sat rocking almost imperceptibly while her husband read. Finally, after a calming interval, she said in a more amiable tone, "Doctor Nesbit, if you've cut up all the women you claim to have dissected in medical school, you know precious little about what's in them, if you get fooled in that Margaret woman."

"The only kind we ever cut up," returned the Doctor in a mild, conciliatory treble, "were perfect—all Satterthwaites."

And when the Doctor fell back to his book, Mrs. Nesbit spent some time reflecting upon the virtues of her liege lord and wondering how such a paragon ever came from so common a State as Indiana, where so far as any one ever knew there was never a family in the whole commonwealth, and the entire population as she understood it carried potatoes in their pockets to keep away rheumatism.

The evening wore away and Dr. and Mrs. Nesbit were alone by the ashes in the smoldering fire in the grate. They were about to go up stairs when the Doctor, who had been looking absent-mindedly into the embers, began meditating aloud about local politics while his wife sewed. His meditation concerned a certain trade between the city and Daniel Sands wherein the city parted with its stock in Sands's public utilities with a face value of something like a million dollars. The stocks were to go to Mr. Sands, while the city received therefor a ten-acre tract east of town on the Wahoo, called Sands Park. After bursting into the

Doctor's political nocturne rather suddenly and violently with her feminine disapproval, Mrs. Nesbit sat rocking, and finally she exclaimed: "Good Lord, Jim Nesbit, I wish I was a man."

"I've long suspected it, my dear," piped her husband.

"Oh, it isn't that—not your politics," retorted Mrs. Nesbit, "though that made me think of it. Do you know what else old Dan Sands is doing?"

The Doctor bent over the fire, stirred it up and replied, "Well, not in particular."

"Philandering," sniffed Mrs. Nesbit.

"Again?" returned the Doctor.

"No," snapped Mrs. Nesbit—"as usual!"

The Doctor had no opinion to express; one of the family specters was engaging his attention at the moment. Presently his wife put down her paper and sat as one wrestling with an impulse. The specter on her side of the hearth was trying to keep her lips sealed. They sat while the mantel clock ticked off five minutes.

"What are you thinking?" the Doctor asked.

"I'm thinking of Dan Sands," replied the wife with some emotion in her voice.

The foot tap of Mrs. Nesbit became audible. She shook her head with some force and exclaimed: "O Jim, wouldn't I like to have that man—just for one day."

"I've noticed," cut in the Doctor, "regarding such propositions from the gentler sex, that the Lord generally tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."

"The shorn lamb—the shorn lamb," retorted Mrs. Nesbit. "The shorn tom-cat! I'd like to shear him." Wherewith she rose and putting out the light led the Doctor to the stairs.

Both knew that the spectral sentinels had used Daniel Sands and his amours only as a seal upon their lips.

The parents could speak in parables about what they felt or fancied because there was so little that was tangible and substantial for them to see. Of all the institutions man has made—the state, the church, his commerce, his schools,—the home is by far the most spiritual. Its successes and its failures are never material. They are never evidenced in any

sort of worldly goods. Only in the hearts of those who dwell in a home, or of those to whom it is dear, do its triumphs and its defeats register themselves. But in Tom Van Dorn's philosophy of life small space was left for things of the spirit alone, to register. He was trying with all his might to build a home upon material things. So above all he built his home around a beautiful woman. Then he lavished upon her and about the house wherein she dwelled, beautiful objects. He was proud of their cost. Their value in dollars and cents gave these objects their chief value in his balance sheet of gain or less in footing up his account with his home. And because what he had was expensive, he prized it. Possibly because he had bought his wife's devotion, at some material sacrifice to his own natural inclinations toward the feminine world, he listed her high in the assets of the home; and so in the only way he could love, he loved her jealously. She and the rugs and pictures and furniture—all were dear to him, as chattels which he had bought and paid for and could brag about. And because he was too well bred to brag, the repression of that natural instinct he added to the cost of the items listed,—rugs, pictures, wife, furniture, house, trees, lot, and blue grass lawn. So when toward the end of the first year of his marriage, he found that actually he could turn his head and follow with his eyes a pretty petticoat going down Market Street, and still fool his wife; when he found he could pry open the eyes of Miss Mauling at the office again with his old ogle, and still have the beautiful love which he had bought with self-denial, its value dropped.

And his wife, who felt in her soul her value passing in the heart she loved, strove to find her fault and to correct it. Daily her devotion manifested itself more plainly. Daily she lived more singly to the purpose of her soul. And daily she saw that purpose becoming a vain pursuit.

Outwardly the home was unchanged as this tragedy was played within the two hearts. The same scenery surrounded the players. The same voices spoke, in the same tones, the same words of endearment, and the same hours brought the same routine as the days passed. Yet the home was slowly sinking into failure. And the specters that sealed the lips

of the parents who stood by and mutely watched the inner drama unfold, watched it unfold and translate itself into life without words, without deeds, without superficial tremor or flinching of any kind—the specters passed the sad story from heart to heart in those mysterious silences wherein souls in this world learn their surest truths.

CHAPTER XIV

IN WHICH OUR HERO STROLLS OUT WITH THE DEVIL TO LOOK AT THE HIGH MOUNTAIN

THE soup had come and gone; great platters of fried chicken had disappeared, with incidental spinach and new peas and potatoes. A bowl of lettuce splashed with a French dressing had been mowed down as the grass, and the goodly company was surveying something less than an acre of strawberry shortcake at the close of a rather hilarious dinner—a spring dinner, to be exact. Rhoda Kollander was reciting with enthusiasm an elaborate and impossible travesty of a recipe for strawberry shortcake, which she had read somewhere, when the Doctor, in his nankeens, putting his hands on the table cloth as one who was about to deliver an oracle, ran his merry eyes down the table, gathering up the Adamses and Mortons and Mayor Brotherton and Morty Sands; fastened his glance upon the Van Dorns and cut in on the interminable shortcake recipe rather ruthlessly thus in his gay falsetto:

"Tom, here—thinks he's pretty smart. And George Brotherton, Mayor of all the Harveys, thinks he is a pretty smooth article; and the Honorable Lady Satterthwaite here, she's got a Maryland notion that she has second sight into the doings of her prince consort." He chuckled and grinned as he beamed at his daughter: "And there is the princess imperial—she thinks she's mighty knolledgeous about her father—but," he cocked his head on one side, enjoying the suspense he was creating as he paused, drawling his words, "I'm just going to show you how I've got 'em all fooled."

He pulled from his pocket a long, official envelope, pulled from the envelope an official document, and also a letter. He laid the official document down before him and opened the letter.

"Kind o' seems to be signed by the Governor of the State," he drolled: "And seems like the more I look at it the surer I am it's addressed to Tom Van Dorn. I'm not much of an elocutionist and never could read at sight, having come from Eendiany, and I guess Rhody here, she's kind of elocutionary and I'll jest about ask her to read it to the ladies and gentlemen!" He handed Mrs. Kollander the letter and passed the sealed document to his son-in-law.

Mrs. Kollander read aloud:

"I take pleasure in handing you through the kindness of Senator James Nesbit your appointment to fill the vacancy in your judicial district created to-day by the resignation of Judge Arbuckle of your district to fill a vacancy in the Supreme Court of this State created there by the resignation of Justice Worrell."

Looking over his wife's shoulder and seeing the significance of the letter, John Kollander threw back his head and began singing in his roaring voice, "For we'll rally round the flag, boys, we'll rally once again, shouting the battle cry of freedom," and the company at the table clapped its hands. And while George Brotherton was bellowing, "Well —say!" Judge Thomas Van Dorn kissed his wife and beamed his satisfaction upon the company.

When the commotion had subsided the chuckling little man, all a-beam with happiness, his pink, smooth face shining like a headlight, explained thus:

"I jest thought these Maryland Satterthwaites and Schenectady Van Dorns was a-gittin' too top-lofty, and I'd have to register one for the Grand Duke of Griggsby's Station, to sort of put 'em in their place!" He was happy; and his vernacular, which always was his pose under emotional stress, was broad, as he went on: "So I says to myself, the Corn Belt Railroad is mighty keen for a Supreme Court decision in the Missouri River rate case, and I says, Worrell J., he's the boy to write it, but I says to the Corn Belt folks, says I, 'It would shatter the respect of the people for their courts if Worrell J. should stay on the bench after writing the kind of a decision you want, so we'll just put him in your law offices at twelve thousand per, which is three times what he is getting now, and then one idear

brought on another and here's Tom's commission and three men and a railroad all made happy!" He threw back his head and laughed silently as he finished, "and all the justices concurring!" After the hubbub of congratulations had passed and the guests had moved into the parlor of the Nesbit home, the little Doctor, standing among them, regaled himself thus:

"Politics is jobs. Jobs is friends. Friends is politics. The reason why the reformers don't get anywhere is that they have no friends in politics. They regard the people as sticky and smelly and low. Bedelia has that notion. But I love 'em! Love 'em and vote 'em!"

Amos Adams opened his mouth to protest, but the Doctor waved him into silence. "I know your idear, Amos! But when the folks get tired of politics that is jobs and want politics that is principles, I'll open as fine a line of principles as ever was shown in this market!"

After the company had gone, Mrs. Nesbit faced her husband with a peremptory: "Well—will you tell me why, Jim Nesbit?" And he sighed and dropped into a chair.

"To save his self-respect! Self-respect grows on what it feeds on, my dear, and I thought maybe if he was a judge"—he looked into the anxious eyes of his wife and went on—"that might hold him!" He rested his head on a hand and drew in a deep breath. "'Vanity, vanity,' saith the Preacher—'all is vanity!' And I thought I'd hitch it to something that might pull him out of the swamp! And I happened to know that he had a sneaking notion of running for Judge this fall, so I thought I'd slip up and help him."

He sighed again and his tone changed. "I did it primarily for Laura," he said wearily, and: "Mother, we might as well face it."

Mrs. Nesbit looked intently at her husband in understanding silence and asked: "Is it any one in particular, Jim—"

He hesitated, then exclaimed: "Oh, I may be wrong, but somehow I don't like the air—the way that Mauling girl assumes authority at the office. Why, she's made me wait in the outer office twice now—for nothing except to show that she could!"

"Yes, Jim—but what good will this judgeship do? How will it solve anything?" persisted the wife. The Doctor let his sigh precede his words: "The office will make him realize that the eyes of the community are on him, that he is in a way a marked man. And then the place will keep him busy and spur on his ambition. And these things should help."

He looked tenderly into the worried face of his wife and smiled. "Perhaps we're both wrong. We don't know. Tom's young and—" He ended the sentence in a "Ho—ho—ho—hum!" and yawned and rose, leading the way up stairs.

In the Van Dorn home a young wife was trying to define herself in the new relation to the community in which the evening's news had placed her. She had no idea of divorcing the judgeship from her life. She felt that marriage was a full partnership and that the judgeship meant much to her. She realized that as a judge's wife her life and her duties—and she was eager always to acquire new duties—would be different from her life and her duties as a lawyer's wife or a doctor's wife or a merchant's wife, for example. For Laura Van Dorn was in the wife business with a consuming ardor, and the whole universe was related to her wifehood. To her marriage was the development of a two-phase soul with but one will. As the young couple entered their home, the wife was saying:

"Tom, isn't it fine to think of the good you can do—these poor folk in the Valley don't really get justice. And they're your friends. They always help you and father in the election, and now you can see that they have their rights. Oh, I'm so glad—so glad father did it. That was his way to show them how he really loves them."

The husband smiled, a husbandly and superior smile, and said absently, "Oh, well, I presume they don't get much out of the courts, but they should learn to keep away from litigation. It's a rich man's game anyway!" He was thinking of the steps before him which might lead him to a higher court and still higher. His ambition vaulted as he spoke. "Laura, Father Jim wouldn't mind having a son-in-law on the United States Supreme Court, and I believe

we can work together and make it in twenty years more!"

As the young wife saw the glow of ambition in his fine, mobile face she stifled the altruistic yearnings, which she had come to feel made her husband uncomfortable, and joined him as he gazed into the crystal ball of the future and saw its glistening chimera.

Perhaps the preceding dialogue wherein Dr. James Nesbit, his wife, his daughter and his son-in-law have spoken may indicate that politics as the Doctor played it was an exceedingly personal chess game. We see him here blithely taking from the people of his state, their rights to justice and trading those rights cheerfully for his personal happiness as it was represented in the possible reformation of his daughter's husband. He thought it would work—this curious bartering of public rights for private ends. He could not see that a man who could accept a judgeship as it had come to Tom Van Dorn, in the nature of things could not take out an essential self-respect which he had forfeited when he took the place. The Doctor was as blind as Tom Van Dorn, as blind as his times. Government was a personal matter in that day; public place was a personal perquisite.

As for the reformation of Tom Van Dorn, for which all this juggling with sacred things was done, he had no idea that his moral regeneration was concerned in the deal, and never in all the years of his service did the vaguest hint come to him that the outrage of justice had been accomplished for his own soul's good.

The next morning Tom Van Dorn read of his appointment as Judge in the morning papers, and he pranced twice the length of Market Street, up one side and down the other, to let the populace congratulate him. Then with a fat box of candy he went to his office, where he gave the candy and certain other tokens of esteem to Miss Mauling, and at noon after the partnership of Calvin & Van Dorn had been dissolved, with the understanding that the young Judge was to keep his law books in Calvin's office, and was to have a private office there—for certain intangible considerations. Then after the business with Joseph Calvin was concluded, the young Judge in his private office with his

hands under his coat-tails preened before Miss Mauling and talked from a shameless soul of his greed for power! The girl before him gave him what he could not get at home, an abject adoration, uncritical, unabashed, unrestrained.

The young man whom the newly qualified Judge had inherited as court stenographer was a sadly unemotional, rather methodical, old maid of a person, and Tom Van Dorn could not open his soul to this youth, so he was wont to stray back to the offices of Joseph Calvin to dictate his instructions to juries, and to look over the books in his own library in making up his decisions. The office came to be known as the Judge's Chambers and the town cocked a gay and suspicious eye at the young Judge. Mr. Calvin's practice doubled and trebled and Miss Mauling lost small caste with the nobility and gentry. And as the summer deepened, Dr. James Nesbit began to see that vanity does not build self-respect.

When the young Judge announced his candidacy for election to fill out the two years' unexpired term of his predecessor, no one opposed Van Dorn in his party convention; but the Doctor had little liking for the young man's intimacy in the office of Joseph Calvin and less liking for the scandal of that intimacy which arose when the rich litigants in the Judge's court crowded into Calvin's office for counsel. The Doctor wondered if he was squeamish about certain matters, merely because it was his own son-in-law who was the subject of the disquieting gossip connected with Calvin's practice in Van Dorn's court. Then there was the other matter. The Doctor could notice that the town was having its smile—not a malicious nor condemning smile, but a tolerant, amused smile about Van Dorn and the Mauling girl; and the Doctor didn't like that. It cut deeply into the Doctor's heart that as the town's smile broadened, his daughter's face was growing perceptibly more serious. The joy she had shown when first she told him of the baby's coming did not illumine her face; and her laughter—her never failing well of gayety—was in some way being sealed. The Doctor determined to talk with Tom on the Good of the Order and to talk man-wise—without feeling of course but without guile.

So one autumn afternoon when the Doctor heard the light, firm step of the young man in the common hallway that led to their offices over the Traders' Bank, the Doctor tuned himself up to the meeting and cheerily called through his open door:

"Tom—Tom, you young scoundrel—come in here and let's talk it all over."

The young man slipped a package into his pocket, and came lightly into the office. He waved his hand gayly and called: "Well—well, pater familias, what's on your chest to-day?" His slim figure was clad in gray—a gray suit, gray shirt, gray tie, gray shoes and a crimson rose bud in his coat lapel. As he slid into a chair and crossed his lean legs the Doctor looked him over. The young Judge's corroding pride in his job was written smartly all over his face and figure. "The fairest of ten thousand, the bright and morning star, Tom," piped the Doctor. Then added briskly, "I want to talk to you about Joe Calvin." The young man lifted a surprised eyebrow. The Doctor pushed ahead as he pulled the county bar docket from his desk and pointed to it. "Joe Calvin's business has increased nearly fifty per cent. in less than six months! And he has the money side of eighty per cent. of the cases in your court!"

"Well—" replied Van Dorn in the mushy drawl that he used with juries, "that's enough! Joe couldn't ask more." Then he added, eying the Doctor closely, "Though I can't say that what you tell me startles me with its suddenness."

"That's just my point," cried the Doctor in his high, shrill voice. "That's just my point, Thomas," he repeated, "and here's where I come in. I got you this job. I am standing for you before the district and I am standing for you now for this election." The Doctor wagged his head at the young man as he said, "But the truth is, Tom, I had some trouble getting you the solid delegation."

"Ah?" questioned the suave young Judge.

"Yes, Tom—my own delegation," replied the Doctor. "You see, Tom, there is a lot of me. There is the one they call Doc Jim; then there's Mrs. Nesbit's husband and there's your father-in-law, and then there's Old Linen Pants. The old man was for you from the jump. Doc Jim was for you

and Mrs. Nesbit's husband was willing to go with the majority of the delegation, though he wasn't strong for you. But I'll tell you, Tom," piped the Doctor, "I did have the devil of a time ironing out the troubles of your father-in-law."

The Doctor leaned forward and pointed a fat, stern finger at his son-in-law. "Tom," the Doctor's voice was shrill and steely, "I don't like your didos with Violet Mauling!" The face above the crimson flower did not flinch.

"I don't suppose you're making love to her. But you have no business fooling around Joe Calvin's office on general principles. Keep out, and keep away from her." And then the Doctor's patience slipped and his voice rose: "What do you want to give her the household bills for? Pay 'em yourself or let Laura send her checks!" The Doctor's tones were harsh, and with the amiable cast off his face his graying blond pompadour hair seemed to bristle militantly. The effect gave the Doctor a fighting face as he barked, "You can't afford it. You must stop it. It's no way to do. I didn't think it of you, Tom!"

After Van Dorn had touched his black wing of hair, his soft mustache and the crimson flower on his coat, he had himself well in hand and had planned his defense and counter attacks. He spoke softly:

"Now, Father Jim—I'm not—" he put a touch of feeling in the "not," "going to give up the Mauling girl. When I'm elected next month, I'm going to make her my court stenographer!" He looked the Doctor squarely in the face and paused for the explosion which came in an excited, piping cry:

"Why, Tom, are you crazy! Take her all over the three counties of this district with you? Why, boy—" But Judge Van Dorn continued evenly: "I don't like a man stenographer. Men make me nervous and self-conscious, and I can't give a man the best that's in me. And I propose to give my best to this job—in justice to myself. And Violet Mauling knows my ways. She doesn't interpose herself between me and my ideas, so I am going to make her court stenographer next month right after the election."

When the Doctor drew in a breath to speak, Van Dorn

put out a hand, checked the elder man and said blandly and smilingly, "And, Father Jim, I'm going to be elected—I'm dead sure of election."

The Doctor thought he saw a glint of sheer malicious impudence in Van Dorn's smile as he finished speaking: "And anyway, pater, we mustn't quarrel right now—Just at this time, Laura—"

"You're a sly dog, now, ain't you! Ain't you a sly dog?" shrilled the Doctor in sputtering rage. Then the blaze in his eyes faded and he cried in despair: "Tom, Tom, isn't there any way I can put the fear of God into you?"

Van Dorn realized that he had won the contest. So he forbore to strike again.

"Doctor Jim, I'm afraid you can't jar me much with the fear of God. You have a God that sneaks in the back door of matter as a kind of a divine immanence that makes for progress and Joe Calvin in there has a God with whiskers who sits on a throne and runs a sort of police court; but one's as impossible as the other. I have no God at all," his chest swelled magnificently, "and here's what happens":

He was talking against time and the Doctor realized it. But his scorn was crusting over his anger and he listened as the young Judge amused himself: "I've defended gamblers and thugs—and crooks, some rich, some poor, mostly poor and mostly guilty. And Joe has been free attorney for the law and order league and has given the church free advice and entertained preachers when he wasn't hiding out from his wife. And he's gone to conference and been a deacon and given to the Lord all his life. And now that it's good business for him to have me elected, can he get a vote out of all his God-and-morality crowd? Not a vote. And all I have to do is to wiggle my finger and the whole crowd of thugs and blacklegs and hoodlums and rich and poor line up for me—no matter how pious I talk. I tell you, Father Jim—there's nothing in your God theory. It doesn't work. My job is to get the best out of myself possible." But this was harking back to Violet Mauling and the young Judge smiled with bland impertinence as he finished, "The fittest survive, my dear pater, and I propose to keep fit—to keep fit—and survive!"

The Doctor's anger cooled, but the pain still twinged his heart, the pain that came as he saw clearly and surely that his daughter's life was bound to the futile task of making bricks without straw. Deep in his soul he knew the anguish before her and its vain, continual round of fallen hopes. As the young Judge strutted up and down the Doctor's office, the father in the elder man dominated him and a kind of contemptuous pity seized him. Pity overcame rage, and the Doctor could not even sputter at his son-in-law. "Fit and survive" kept repeating themselves over in Dr. Nesbit's mind, and it was from a sad, hurt heart that he spoke almost kindly: "Tom—Tom, my boy, don't be too sure of yourself. You may keep fit and you may survive—but Tom, Tom—" the Doctor looked steadily into the bold, black eyes before him and fancied they were being held consciously from dropping and shifting as the Doctor cried: "For God's sake, Tom, don't let up! Keep on fighting, son, God or no God—you've got a devil—keep on fighting him!"

The olive cheeks flushed for a fleeting second. Van Dorn laughed an irritated little laugh. "Well," he said, turning to the door, "be over to-night?—or shall we come over? Anything good for dinner?"

A minute later he came swinging into his own office. He pulled a package from his pocket. "Violet," he said, going up to her writing desk and half sitting upon it, as he put the package before her, "here's the candy."

He picked up her little round desk mirror, smiled at her in it, and played rather idly about the desk for a foolish moment before going to his own desk. He sat looking into the street, folding a sheet of blank paper. When it became a wad he snapped it at the young woman. It hit her round, beautiful neck and disappeared into her square-cut bodice.

"Get it out for you if you want it?" He laughed fatuously.

The girl flashed quick eyes at him, and said, "Oh, I don't know," and went on with her work. He began to read, but in a few minutes laid his book down.

"How'd you like to be a court stenographer?" The girl kept on writing. "Honest now I mean it. If I win this

election and get this job for the two years of unexpired term, you'll be court stenographer—pays fifteen hundred a year." The girl glanced quickly at him again, with fire in her eyes, then looked conspicuously down at the keyboard of the writing machine.

"I couldn't leave home," she said finally, as she pulled out a sheet of paper. "It wouldn't be the thing—do you think so?"

He put his feet on the desk, showing his ankles of pride, and fingering his mustache, smiling a squinty smile with his handsome, beady eyes as he said: "Oh, I'd take care of you. You aren't afraid of me, are you?"

They both laughed. And the girl came over with a sheet of paper. "Here is that Midland Valley letter. Will you sign it now?"

He managed to touch her hand as she handed him the sheet, and again to touch her bare forearm as he handed it back after signing it. For which he got two darts from her eyes.

A client came in. Joseph Calvin hurried in and out, a busy little rat of a man who always wore shiny clothes that bagged at the knees and elbows. George Brotherton crashed in through the office on city business, and so the afternoon wore away. At the end of the day, Thomas Van Dorn and Miss Mauling locked up the office and went down the hall and the stairs to the street together. He released her arm as they came to the street, and tipped his hat as she rounded the corner for home. He saw the white-clad Doctor trudging up the low incline that led to Elm Street.

Dr. Nesbit was asking the question, Who are the fit? Who should survive? His fingers had been pinched in the door of the young Judge's philosophy and the Doctor was considering much that might be behind the door. He wondered if it was the rich and the powerful who should survive. Or he thought perhaps it is those who give themselves for others. There was Captain Morton with his one talent, pottering up and down the town talking all kinds of weather, and all kinds of rebuffs that he might keep the girls in school and make them ready to serve society; yet according to Tom's standards of success the Captain was

unfit; and there was George Brotherton, ignorant, but loyal, foolishly blind, of a tender heart, yet compared with those who used his ignorance and played upon his blindness (and the Doctor winced at his part in that game) Mr. Brotherton was cast aside among the world's unfit; and so was Henry Fenn, fighting with his devil like a soldier; and so was Dick Bowman going into the mines for his family, sacrificing light and air and the joy of a free life that the wife and children might be clad, housed and fed and that they might enjoy something of the comforts of the great civilization which his toil was helping to build up around them; yet in his grime Dick was accounted exceedingly unfit. Dick only had a number on the company's books and his number corresponded to a share of stock and it was the business of the share of stock to get as much out of Dick and give him back as little, and to take as much from society in passing for coal as it could, and being without soul or conscience or feeling of any kind, the share of stock put the automatic screws on Dick—as their numbers corresponded. And for squeezing the sweat out of him the share was accounted unusually fit, while poor Dick —why he was merely a number on the books and was called a unit of labor. Then there was Daniel Sands. He had spread his web all over the town. It ran in the pipes under ground that brought water and gas, and the wires above ground, that brought light and power and communication. The web found its way into the earth—through deep cuts in the earth, worming along caverns where it held men at work; then the web ran into foul dens where the toilers were robbed of their health and strength and happiness and even of the money the toilers toiled for, and the web brought it all back slimey and stinking from unclean hands into the place where the spider sat spinning. And there was his son and daughter; Mr. Sands had married at least four estimable ladies with the plausible excuse that he was doing it only to give his children a home. Mr. Sands had given his son a home, to be sure; but his son had not taken a conscience from the home—for who was there at home to give it? Not the estimable ladies who had married Mr. Sands, for they had none

or they would have been somewhere else, to be sure; not Mr. Sands himself, for he was busy with his web, and conscience rips such webs as his endways, and Daniel would have none of that. And the servants who had reared the youth had no conscience to give him; for it was made definite and certain in that home that they were paid for what they did, so they did what they were paid for, and bestowing consciences upon young gentlemen is no part of the duty of the "help" in a home like that.

As for his daughter, Anne, again one of God's miracles was wrought. There she was growing in the dead atmosphere of that home—where she had known two mothers before she was ten and she saw with a child's shrewd eyes that another was coming. Yet in some subsoil of the life about her the roots of her life were finding a moral sense. Her hazel eyes were questioning so curiously the old man who fathered her that he felt uncomfortable when she was near him. Yet for all the money he had won and all that money had made him, he was reckoned among the fit. Then there was the fit Mr. Van Dorn and the fit Mr. Calvin. Mr. Calvin never missed a Sunday in church, gave his tithe, and revered the law. He adjusted his halo and sang feelingly in prayer meeting about his cross and hoped ultimately for his crown as full and complete payment and return, the same being the legal and just equivalent for said hereinbefore named cross as aforesaid, and Mr. Calvin was counted among the fit, and the Doctor smiled as he put him in the list. And Mr. Van Dorn had confessed that he was among the fit and his fitness consisted in getting everything that he could without being caught.

But these reflections were vain and unprofitable to Dr. Nesbit, and so he turned himself to the consideration of the business in hand: namely, to make his calling and reëlection sure to the State Senate that November. So he went over Greeley County behind his motherly sorrel mare, visiting the people, telling them stories, prescribing for their ailments, eating their fried chicken, cream gravy and mashed potatoes, and putting to rout the forces of the loathed opposition who maintained that the Doctor beat his wife, by sometimes

showing said wife as exhibit "A" without comment in those remote parts of the county where her proud figure was unknown.

In November he was reëlected, and there was a torchlight procession up the aisle of elms and all the neighbors stood on the front porch, including the Van Dorns and the Mortons and John Kollander in his blue soldier clothes, carrying the flag into another county office, and the Henry Fenns, while the Doctor addressed the multitude! And there was cheering, whereupon Mr. Van Dorn, Judge pro tem and Judge-elect, made a speech with eloquence and fire in it; John Kollander made his well-known flag speech, and Captain Morton got some comfort out of the election of Comrade Nesbit, who had stood where bullets were thickest and as a boy had bared his breast to the foe to save his country, and drawing the Doctor into the corner, filed early application to be made sergeant-at-arms of the State Senate and was promised that or Something Equally Good. The hungry friends of the new Senator so loaded him with obligations that blessed night that he again sold his soul to the devil, went in with the organization, got all the places for all his people, and being something of an organizer himself, distributed the patronage for half the State.

Ten days later—or perhaps it may have been two weeks later, at half past five in the evening—the Judge-elect was sitting at his desk, handsomely dressed in black—as befitting the dignity of his office. He and his newly appointed court stenographer had returned the hour before from an adjoining county where they had been holding court. The Judge was alone, if one excepts the young woman at the typewriting desk, before whom he was preening, as though she were a mere impersonal mirror. During the hour the Judge had visited the tailor's and had returned to his office wearing a new, long-tailed coat. His black silk neck-scarf was resplendently new, his large, soft, black hat—of a type much favored by statesmen in that day—was cocked at a frivolous angle, showing the raven's wing of black hair upon his fine forehead. A black silk watchguard crossed his black vest; his patent leather shoes shone below his trim black silk socks,

and he rubbed his smooth, olive cheek with the yellow chrysanthemum upon his coat lapel.

"Gee, but you're swell," said Miss Mauling. "You look good enough to eat."

"Might try a bite—if you feel that way about it," replied the Judge. He put his hands in his pockets, tried them under his long coat tails, buttoned the coat and thrust one hand between the buttons, put one hand in a trousers' pocket, letting the other fall at his side, put both hands behind him, and posed for a few minutes exchanging more or less fervent glances with the girl. A step sounded in the hallway. The man and woman obviously listened. It was a heavy tread; it was coming to the office door. The man and woman slipped into Judge Van Dorn's private office. When the outer door opened, and it was apparent that some one was in the outer office, Miss Mauling appeared, note book in hand, quite brisk and businesslike with a question in her good afternoon.

"Where's Van Dorn?" The visitor was tall, rawboned, and of that physical cast known as lanky. His face was flinty, and his red hair was untrimmed at the neck and ears.

"The Judge is engaged just now," smiled Miss Mauling. "Will you wait?" She was careful not to ask him to sit. Grant Adams looked at the girl with a fretful stare. He did not take off his hat, and he shook his head toward Van Dorn's office door as he said brusquely, "Tell him to come out. It's important." The square shoulders of the tall man gave a lunge or hunch toward the door. "I tell you it's important."

Miss Mauling smiled. "But he can't come out just now. He's busy. Any message I can give him?"

The man was excited, and his voice and manner showed his temper.

"Now, look here—I have no message; tell Van Dorn I want him quick."

"What name, please?" responded Miss Mauling, who knew that the visitor knew she was playing.

"Grant Adams—tell him it's his business and not mine—except—"

But the girl had gone. It was several minutes before Tom Van Dorn moved gracefully and elegantly into the room. "Ah," he began. Grant glared at him.

"I've just driven down from Nesbit's with Kenyon, and Mrs. Nesbit says to tell you Laura's there—came over this morning, and you're to come just as quick as you can. They tried to get you on the 'phone, but you weren't here. Do you understand? You're to come quick, and I've left my horse out here for you. Kenyon and I'll catch a car home."

The pose with one hand in his trousers pocket and the other hanging loosely suited the Judge-elect as he answered: "Is that all?" Then he added, as his eyes went over the blue overalls: "I presume Mrs. Nesbit advised you as to the reason for—for, well—for haste?"

Grant saw Van Dorn's eyes wander to the girl's for approval. "I shall not need your horse, Adams," Van Dorn went on without waiting for a reply to his question. Then again turning his eyes to the girl, he asked: "Adams, anything I can do to repay your kindness?"

"No—" growled Adams, turning to go.

"Say, Adams," called Van Dorn, rubbing his hands and still smiling at the girl, "you wouldn't take a cigar in—in anticipation of the happy—"

Adams whirled around. His big jaw muscles worked in knots before he spoke; his blue eyes were set and raging. But he looked at the floor an instant before crying:

"You go to hell!" And an instant later, the lank figure had left the room, slamming the door after him. Grant heard the telephone bell ringing, and heard the girl's voice answering it, then he went to the doctor's office. As he was writing the words "At Home" on the slate on the door, he could hear Miss Mauling at the telephone.

"Yes," and again, "Yes," and then, "Is there any message," and finally she giggled, "All right, I'll call him." Then Grant stalked down the stairs. The receiver was hanging down. The Doctor at the other end of the wire could hear a man and a woman laughing. Van Dorn stepped to the instrument and said: "Yes, Doctor."

Then, "What—well, you don't say!"

And still again, "Yes, he was just here this minute; shall

I call him back?" And before hanging up the receiver, he said, "Why, of course, I'll come right out."

The Judge-elect turned gracefully around, smiling complacently: "Well, Violet—it's your bet. It's a girl!"

The court stenographer poked a teasing forefinger at him and whittled it with another in glee. Then, as if remembering something, she asked: "How's your wife?"

Van Dorn's face was blank for an instant. "By George—that's so. I forgot to ask." He started to pick up the telephone receiver, but checked himself. He pulled his broad-brimmed hat over his eyes, and started for the door, waving merrily and rubbing his chin with his flower.

"Ta ta," he called as he saw the last of her flashing smile through the closing door.

And thus into a world where only the fittest survive that day came Lila Van Dorn,—the child of a mother's love.

CHAPTER XV

WHEREIN WE WELCOME IN A NEW YEAR AND CONSIDER A SERIOUS QUESTION

THE journey around the sun is a long and tumultuous one. Many of us jolt off the earth as we ride, others of us are turned over and thrown into strange and absurd positions, and a few of us sit tight and edge along, a little further toward the soft seats. But as we whirl by the stations, returning ever and again to the days that are precious in our lives, to the seasons that give us greatest joy, we measure our gains, on the long journey, in terms of what we love. "A little over a year ago to-night, my dear," chirruped Dr. Nesbit, pulling a gray hair from his temple where hairs of any kind were becoming scarce enough. "A year, a month, and a week and a day ago to-night the town and the Harvey brass band came out here and they tramped up the blue grass so that it won't get back in a dozen years.

"Well," he mused, as the fire burned, "I got 'em all their jobs, I got two or three good medical laws passed, and I hope I have made some people happy."

"Yes, my dear," answered his wife. "In that year little Lila has come into short dresses, and Kenyon Adams has learned to play on the piano, and is taking up the violin."

"How time has flown since election a year ago," said Captain Morton to his assembled family as they sat around the base burner smoldering in the dining-room. "And I've put the patent window fastener into forty houses and sold Henry Fenn the burglar alarm to go with his." And the eldest Miss Morton spoke up and said:

"My good land, I hope we'll have a new principal by this time next year. Another year under that man will kill me—pa, I do wish you'd run for the school board."

And the handsome Miss Morton added, "My goodness,

Emma Morton, if I didn't have anything to do but draw forty dollars every month for yanking a lot of little kids around and teaching them the multiplication tables, I wouldn't say much. Why, we've come through algebra into geometry and half way through Cicero, while you've been fussing with that old principal—and Mrs. Herdicker's got a new trimmer, and we girls down at the shop have to put up with her didoes. Talk of trouble, gee!"

"Martha, you make me weary," said the youngest Miss Morton, eating an apple. "If you'd had scarlet fever and measles the same year, and your old dress just turned and your same old hat, you'd have something to talk about."

"Well," remarked His Honor the Mayor to Henry Fenn and Morty Sands as they sat in the Amen Corner New Year's eve, looking at the backs of a shelf of late books and viewing several shelves of standard sets with highly gilded backs, "it's more'n a year since election—and well, say—I've got all my election bets paid now and am out of debt again, and the book store's gradually coming along. By next year this time I expect to put four more shelves of copyrighted books in and cut down the paper backs to a stack on the counter. But old Lady Nicotine is still the patron of the fine arts—say, if it wasn't for the 'baccy little Georgie would be so far behind with his rent that he would knock off a year and start over."

Young Mr. Sands rolled a cigarette and lighted it and said: "It's a whole year—and Pop's gone a long time without a wife; it'll be two years next March since the last one went over the hill who was brought out to make a home for little Morty, and I saw Dad peeking out of the hack window as we were standing waiting for the hearse, and wondered which one of the old girls present he'd pick on. But," mused Morty, "I guess it's Anne's eyes. Every time he edges around to the subject of our need of a mother, Anne turns her eyes on him and he changes the subject." Morty laughed quietly and added: "When Anne gets out of her 'teens she'll put father in a monastery!"

"Honeymoon's kind of waning—eh, Henry?" asked Judge Van Dorn, who dropped in for a magazine and heard

the conversation about the passing of the year. He added: "I see you've been coming down here pretty regularly for three or four months!" Henry looked up sadly and shook his head. "You can't break the habit of a dozen years. And I got to coming here back in the days when George ran a pool and billiard hall, and I suppose I'll come until I die, and then George will bring his wheezy old quartette around and sing over me, and probably act as pall-bearer too—if he doesn't read the burial service of the lodge in addition."

"Well, a year's a year," said the suave Judge Van Dorn. "A year ago you boys were smoking on me as the new judge of this judicial district. All hail Thane of Cawdor—" He smiled his princely smile, taking every one in with his frank, bold eyes, and waved himself into the blustery night. There he met Mr. Calvin, who, owing to a turn matters had taken at home, was just beginning another long period of exile from the hearthstone. He walked the night like a ghost, silent and grim. His thin little neck, furrowed behind by the sunken road between his arteries, was adorned by two tufts of straggling hair, and as his overcoat collar was rolled and wrinkled, he had an appearance of extreme neglect and dejection. "Did you realize that it's over a year since election?" said Van Dorn. "We might as well begin looking out for next year, Joe," he added, "if you've got nothing better to do. I wish you'd go down the row to-night and see the boys and tell them I want to talk to them in the next ten days or so; a man never can be too early in these things; and say—if you happen in the Company store down there and see Violet Mauling, slip her a ten and charge it to me on the books; I wonder how she's doing—I haven't heard of her for three months. Nice girl, Violet."

And Mrs. Herdicker hadn't heard of Miss Mauling for some time, and sitting in her little office back of the millinery store, sorting over her old bills, she came to a bill badly dog-eared with Miss Mauling's name on it. The bill called for something like $75 and the last payment on it had been made nearly half a year ago. So she looked at that bill and added ten dollars to Mrs. Van Dorn's bill for the last hat she bought, and did what she could to resign herself to the in-

justices of a cruel world. But it had been a good year for Mrs. Herdicker. New wells in new districts had come gushing gas and oil into Harvey in great geysers and the work on the new smelter was progressing, and the men in the mines had been kept steadily at work; for Harvey coal was the best in the Missouri Valley. So the ladies who are no better than they should be and the ladies who are much better than they should be, and the ladies who will stand for a turned ribbon, and a revived feather, and are just about what they may be expected to be, all came in and spent their money like the princesses that they were. And Mrs. Herdicker figured in going over her stock just which hat she could sell to Mrs. Nesbit as a model hat from the Paris exhibit at the World's Fair, and which one she could put on Mrs. Fenn as a New York sample, and as she built her castles the loss of the $75 to Miss Mauling had its compensating returns, and she smiled and thought that just a year ago she had offered that same World's Fair Model to the wife of the newly elected State Senator and she must put on a new bunch of flowers and bend down the brim.

The Dexters were sitting by the stove in the living-room with Amos Adams; they had come down to the lonely little home to prepare a good dinner for the men. "A year ago to-day," said the minister to the group as he put down the newspaper, "Kenyon got his new fiddle."

"The year has brought me something—I tell you," Jasper said. "I've bought a horse with my money I earned as page in the State Senate and I've got a milk route, and have all the milk in the neighborhood to distribute. That's what the year has done for me."

"Well," reflected the minister, "we've got the mission church in South Harvey on a paying basis, and the pipe organ in the home church paid for—that's some comfort. And they do say," his eyes twinkled as he looked at his wife, "that the committee is about to settle all the choir troubles. That's pretty good for a year."

"Another year," sighed Amos Adams, and the wind blew through the gaunt branches of the cottonwood trees in the yard, and far down in the valley came the moaning as of many waters, and the wind played its harmonies in the

woodlot. The old man repeated the words: "Another year," and asked himself how many more years he would have to wait and listen to the sighing of the moaning waters that washed around the world. And Kenyon Adams, lying flushed and tousled and tired upon a couch near by, heard the waters in his dreams and they made such music that his thin, little face moved in an eyrie smile.

"Mag," said a pale, nervous girl with dead, sad eyes as she looked around at the new furniture in the new house, and avoided the rim of soft light that came from the electric under the red shade, "did you think I was cheeky to ask you all those questions over the 'phone—about where Henry was to-night, and what you'd be doing?" The hostess said: "Why, no, Violet, no—I'm always glad to see you."

There was a pause, and the girl exclaimed: "That's what I come out for. I couldn't stand it any longer. Mag, what in God's name have I done? Didn't you see me the other day on Market Street? You were looking right at me. It's been nearly a year since we've talked. You used to couldn't get along a week without a good talk; but now—say, Mag, what's the matter? what have I done to make you treat me like this?" There was a tremor in the girl's voice. She looked piteously at the wife, radiant in her red house gown. The hostess spoke. "Look here, Violet Mauling, I did see you on Market Street, and I did cut you dead. I knew it would bring you up standing and we'd have this thing out."

The girl looked her question, but flushed. Then she said, "You mean the old man?"

"I mean the old man. It's perfectly scandalous, Violet; didn't you get your lesson with Van Dorn?" returned the hostess. "The old man won't marry you—you don't expect that, do you?" The girl shook her head. The woman continued, "Well, then drop it. You can't afford to be seen with him."

"Mag," returned the visitor, "I tell you before God I can't afford not to. It's my job. It's all I've got. Mamma hasn't another soul except me to depend on. And he's harmless—the old coot's as harmless as a child. Honest and true, Mag, if I ever told the truth that's it. He just

stands around and is silly—just makes foolish breaks to hear himself talk—that's all. But what can I do? He keeps me in the company store, and Heaven knows he doesn't kill himself paying me—only $8 a week, as far as that goes, and then he talks and talks and talks about Judge Van Dorn, and snickers and drops his front false teeth—ugh!—and drivels. But, Mag, he's harmless as a baby."

"Well," returned the hostess, "Henry says every one is talking about it, and you're a common scandal, Violet Mauling, and you ought to know it. I can't hold you up, as you well know—no one can."

Then there followed a flood of tears, and after it had subsided the two women were sitting on a couch. "I want to tell you about Tom Van Dorn, Mag—you never understood. You thought I used to chase him. God knows I didn't, Mag—honest, honest, honest! You knew as well as anything all about it; but I never told you how I fought and fought and all that and how little by little he came closer and closer, and no one ever will know how I cried and how ashamed I was and how I tried to fight him off. That's the God's truth, Mag—the God's truth if you ever heard it."

The girl sobbed and hid her face. "Once when papa died he sent me a hundred dollars through Mr. Brotherton, and mamma thought it came from the Lodge; but I knew better. And, O Mag, Mag, you'll never know how I felt to bury papa on that kind of money. And I saved for nearly a year to pay it back, and of course I couldn't, for he kept getting me expensive things and I had to get things to go with 'em and went in debt, and then when I went there in the office it was all so—so close and I couldn't fight, and he was so powerful—you know just how big and strong, and—O Mag, Mag, Mag—you'll never know how I tried—but I just couldn't. Then he made me court reporter and took me over the district." The girl looked up into the great, soft, beautiful eyes of Margaret Fenn, and thought she saw sympathy there. That was a common mistake; others made it in looking at Margaret's eyes. The girl felt encouraged. She came closer to her one-time friend. "Mag," she said, "they lied awfully about how I lost my job. They said Mrs. Van Dorn made a row. Honest, Mag, there's nothing

to that. She never even dreamed anything was—well—was—don't you know. She wasn't a bit jealous, and is as nice as she can be to me right now. It was this way. You know when I sent mamma away last May for a visit, and the Van Dorns asked me over there to stay?" Mrs. Fenn nodded. "Well," continued Violet, "one day in court—you know when they were trying that bond case—the city bonds and all—well, the Judge scribbled a note on his desk and handed it to me. It said my room door creaked, and not to shut it." She stopped and put her head in her hand and rocked her body. "I know, Mag, it was awful, but some way I just couldn't help it. He is so strong, and—you know, Mag, how we used to say there's some men when they come about you just make you kind of flush all over and weak—well, he's that way. And, anyway, like a fool I dropped that note and one of the jurors—a farmer from Union township—picked it up and took it straight to Doctor Jim."

The girl hid her face in her friend's dress. "It was awful." She spoke without looking up. "But, O Mag—Doctor Jim was fine—so gentle, so kind. The Judge thought he would cuss around a lot, but he didn't—not even to him—the Judge said. And the Doctor came to me as bashful and—as—well, your own father couldn't have been better to you. So I just quit, and the Judge got me the job in the Company store and the Doctor drops in and she—yes, Mag, the Judge's wife comes with the Doctor sometimes, and now it's been five months to-day since I left the court reporter's work and I have hardly seen the Judge to speak to him since. But they all know, I guess, but mamma, and I sometimes think folks try to talk to her; and that old man Sands comes snooping and snickering around like an old dog hunting a buried bone, and he's my job, and I don't know what to do."

Neither did Margaret know what to do, so she let her go and let her stay, and knew her old friend no more. For Margaret was rising in the world, and could have no encumbrances; and Miss Mauling disappeared in South Harvey and that New Year's Eve marked the sad anniversary of the break in her relations with Mrs. Fenn. And it is all set down here on this anniversary to show what a jolty journey

some of us make as we jog around the sun, and to show the gentle reader how the proud Mr. Van Dorn hunts his prey and what splendid romances he enjoys and what a fair sportsman he is.

But the old year is restless. It has painted the sky of South Harvey with the smoke of a score of smelter chimneys; it has burned in the drab of the dejected-looking houses, and it has added a few dozen new ones for the men and their families who operate the smelter.

Moreover, the old year has run many new, strange things through a little boy's eyes as he looks sadly into a queer world—a little, black-eyed boy, while a grand lady with a high head sits on a piano bench beside the child and plays for him the grand music that was fashionable in her grand day. The passing year pressed into his little heart all that the music told him—not of the gray misery of South Harvey, not of the thousands who are mourning and toiling there, but instead the old year has whispered to the child the beautiful mystic tales of great souls doing noble deeds, of heroes who died that men might live and love, of beauty and of harmony too deep for any words of his that throb in him and stir depths in his soul to high aspiration. It has all gone through his ears; for his eyes see little that is beautiful. There is, of course, the beauty of the homely hours he spends with those who love him best, hours spent at school and joyous hours spent by the murmuring creek, and there is what the grand lady at the piano thinks is a marvel of beauty in the ornate home upon the hill. But the most beautiful thing he sees as the old year winds the passing panorama of life for his eyes is the sunshine and prairie grass. This comes to him of a Sunday when he walks with Grant—brother Grant, out in the fields far away from South Harvey—where the frosty breath of autumn has turned the grass to lavender and pale heliotrope, and the hills roll away and away like silent music and the clouds idling lazily over the hillsides afar off cast dark shadows that drift in the lavender sea. Now the smoke that the old year paints upon the blue prairie sky will fade as the year passes, and the great smelters may crumble and men may plow over the ground where they stand so proudly even to-day; but the music in

the boy's heart, put there by the passing year, and the glory of the sunshine and the prairie grass with the meadow lark's sad evening song as it quivers for a moment in the sunset air,—these have been caught in the child's soul and have passed through the strange alchemy of God's great mystery of human genius into an art that is the heritage of the race. For into the mind of that child—that eyrie, large-eyed, wondering, silent, lonely-seeming child—the signals of God were passing. When he grew into his man's estate and could give them voice, the winds of the prairie, low and gentle, the soft lisping of quiet waters, the moving passion of the hurricane, the idle dalliance of the clouds whose purple shadows combed the rolling hills, and all the ecstasy of the love cry of solitary prairie birds, found meaning and the listening world heard, through his music, God speaking to His children.

So the year moved quickly on. Its tasks were countless. It had another child to teach another message. There was a little girl in the town—a small girl with the bluest eyes in the world and tiny curls—yellow curls that wound so softly around her mother's fingers that you would think that they were not curls at all but golden dreams of curls that had for the moment come true and would fade back into fairy-land whence they came. And the passing year had to prop the child at a window while the dusk came creeping into the quiet house. There she sat waiting, watching, hoping that the proud, handsome man who came at twilight down the way leading to the threshold, would smile at her. She was not old enough to hope he would take her in his arms where she could cuddle and be loved. So the passing year had to take a fine brush and paint upon the small, wistful face a fleeting shadow, the mere ghost of a sadness that came and went as she watched and waited for the father love.

And Judge Thomas Van Dorn, the punctilious, gay, resistless, young Tom Van Dorn was deaf to the deeper voices that called to him and beckoned him to rest his soul. And soon upon the winds that roam the world and carry earth dreams back to ghosts, and bring ghosts of what we would be back to our dreams—the roaming winds bore away the

passing year, but they could not take the shadows that it left upon the child's tender heart.

Now, when the old year with all its work lay down in the innumerable company of its predecessors, and the bells rang and the whistles blew in South Harvey to welcome in the new year, the midnight sky was blazoned with the great torches from the smelter chimneys, and the pumps in the oil wells kept up their dolorous whining and complaining, like great insects battening upon an abandoned world. In South Harvey the lights of the saloons and the side of the dragon's spawn glowed and beckoned men to death. Money tinkled over the bars, and whispered as it was crumpled in the claws of the dragon. For money the scurrying human ants hurried along the dark, half-lighted streets from the ant hills over the mines. For money the cranes of the pumps creaked their monody. For money the half-naked men toiled to their death in the fumes of the smelter. So the New Year's bells rang a pean of welcome to the money that the New Year would bring with its toll of death.

"Money," clanged the church bells in the town on the hill. "Money makes wealth and since we have banished our kings and stoned our priests, money is the only thing in our material world that will bring power and power brings pleasure and pleasure brings death."

"And death? and death? and death?" tolled the church bells that glad New Year, and then ceased in circling waves of sound that enveloped the world, still inquiring—"and death? and death?" fainter and fainter until dawn.

The little boy who heard the bells may have heard their plaintive question; for in the morning twilight, sitting in his nightgown on his high chair looking into the cheerful mouth of the glowing kitchen stove, while the elders prepared breakfast, the child who had been silent for a long time raised his face and asked:

"Grant—what is death?" The youth at his task answered by telling about the buried seed and the quickening plant. The child listened and shook his head.

"Father," he asked, addressing the old man, who was rubbing his chilled hands over the fire, "what is death?" The old man spoke, slowly. He ran his fingers through his

beard and then addressing the youth who had spoken rather than the child, replied:

"Death? Death?" and looked puzzled, as if searching for his words. "Death is the low archway in the journey of life, where we all—high and low, weak and strong, poor and rich, must bow into the dust, remove our earthly trappings, wealth and power and pleasure, before we rise to go upon the next stage of our journey into wider vistas and greener fields."

The child nodded his head as one who has just appraised and approved a universe, replying sagely, "Oh," then after a moment he added: "Yes." And said no more.

But when the sun was up, and the wheels scraped on the gravel walk before the Adams home, and the silvery, infectious laugh of a young mother waked the echoes of the home, as she bundled up Kenyon for his daily journey, the old man and the young man heard the child ask: "Aunty Laura—what is death?" The woman with her own child near in the very midst of life, only laughed and laughed again, and Kenyon laughed and Lila laughed and they all laughed.

CHAPTER XVI

GRANT ADAMS IS SOLD INTO BONDAGE AND MARGARET FENN RECEIVES A SHOCK

PERHAPS the sound of their laughter drowned the mournful voices of the bells in Grant Adams's heart. But the bells of the New Year left within him some stirring of their eternal question. For as the light of day sniffed out, Grant in a cage full of miners, with Dick Bowman and one of his boys standing beside him, going down to the second level of the mine, asked himself the question that had puzzled him: Why did not these men get as much out of life as their fellows on the same pay in the town who work in stores and offices? He could see no particular difference in the intelligence of the men in Harvey and the workers in South Harvey; yet there they were in poorer clothes, with faces not so quick, clearly not so well kept from a purely animal standpoint, and even if they were sturdier and physically more powerful, yet to the young man working with them in the mine, it seemed that they were a different sort from the white-handed, keen-faced, smooth-shaven, well-groomed clerks of Market Street, and that the clerks were getting the better of life. And Grant cried in his heart: "Why—why—why?"

Then Dick Bowman said: "Red—penny for your thoughts?" The men near by turned to Grant and he said: "Hello, Dick—" Then to the boy: "Well, Mugs, how are you?" He spoke to the others, Casper and Barney and Evans and Hugh and Bill and Dan and Tom and Lew and Gomer and Mike and Dick—excepting Casper Herdicker, mostly Welsh and Irish, and they passed around some more or less ribald greetings. Then they all stepped upon the soft ground and stood in the light of the flickering oil torches that hung suspended from timbers.

Stretching down long avenues these flickering torches blocked out the alleys of the mine in either direction from the room, perhaps fifty by forty feet, six or seven feet high, where they were standing. A car of coal drawn by forlorn mules and pushed by a grinning boy, came creaking around a distant corner, and drew nearer to the cage. A score of men ending their shift were coming into the passageways from each end, shuffling along, tired and silent. They met the men going to work with a nod or a word and in a moment the room at the main bottom was empty and silent, save for the groaning car and the various language spoken by the grinning boy to the unhappy mule. Grant Adams turned off the main passage to an air course, where from the fans above cold air was rushing along a narrow and scarcely lighted runway about six feet wide and lower than the main passage. Down this passage the new mule barn was building. Grant went to his work, and just outside the barn, snuffed a sputtering torch that was dripping burning oil into a small oily puddle on the damp floor. The room was cold. Three men were with him and he was directing them, while he worked briskly with them. Occasionally he left the barn to oversee the carpenters who were timbering up a new shaft in a lower level that was not yet ready for operation. Fifty miners and carpenters were working on the third level, clearing away passages, making shaft openings, putting in timbers, constructing air courses and getting the level ready for real work. On the second level, in the little rooms, off the long, gloomy passages lighted with the flaring torches hanging from the damp timbers that stretched away into long vistas wherein the torches at the ends of the passage glimmered like fireflies, men were working—two hundred men pegging and digging and prying and sweating and talking to their "buddies," the Welsh in monosyllables and the Irish in a confusion of tongues. The cars came jangling along the passageways empty and went back loaded and groaning. Occasionally the piping voice of a boy and the melancholy bray of a mule broke the deep silence of the place.

For sound traveled slowly through the gloom, as though the torches sapped it up and burned it out in faint, trem-

bling light to confuse the men who sometimes came plodding down the galleries to and from the main bottom. At nine o'clock Grant Adams had been twice over the mine, on the three levels and had thirty men hammering away for dear life. He sent a car of lumber down to the mule barn, while he went to the third level to direct the division of an air shaft into an emergency escape. On one side of this air shaft the air came down and there was a temporary hoist for the men on the third level and on the other side a wooden stairway was to be built up seventy feet toward the second level.

At ten o'clock Grant came back to the second level by the hoist in the air shaft and as he started down the low air course branching off from the main passage and leading to the new mule barn, he smelled burning pine; and hurrying around a corner saw that the boy who dumped the pine boards for the mule barn had not taken the boards into the barn, nor even entirely to the barn, but had dumped them in the passage to the windward of the barn, under the leaky torch, and Grant could see down the air course the ends of the boards burning brightly.

The men working in the barn could not smell the fire, for the wind that rushed down the air course was carrying the smoke and fumes away from them. Grant ran down the course toward the fire, which was fanned by the rushing air, came to the lumber, which was not all afire, jumped through the flames, slapping the little blazes on his clothes with his hat as he came out, and ran into the barn calling to the men to help him put out the fire. They spent two or three minutes trying to attach the hose to the water plug there, but the hose did not fit the plug; then they tried to turn the plug to get water in their dinner pails and found that the plug had rusted and would not turn. While they worked the fire grew. It was impossible to send a man back through it, so Grant sent a man speeding around the air course, to get a wrench from the pump room or from some one in the main bottom to turn on the water. In the meantime he and the other two men worked furiously to extinguish the fire by whipping it with their coats and aprons, but always the flames beat them back. Helplessly they saw it eating along

the mine timbers far down the vacant passage. Little red devils of flame that winked maliciously two hundred feet away, and went out, then sprang up again, then blazed steadily. Grant and the two men tugged frantically at the burning boards, trying to drag them out of the passageway into the barn, but only here and there could an end be picked up, and it took five minutes to get half a dozen charred boards into the barn. While they struggled with the charred boards the flames down the passage kept glowing brighter and brighter. The men were conscious that the flames were playing around the second torch below the barn. Although they realized that the man they sent for the wrench had nearly half a mile to go and come by the roundabout way, they asked one another if he was making the wrench!

Men began poking their heads into the course and calling, "Need any help down there," and Grant cried, "Yes, go to the pump in the main balcony with your buckets and get water." The man sent for the wrench appeared down the long passage. Grant yelled,

"Hurry—hurry, man!" But though he came running, the fire seemed to be going faster than he was. They could hear men calling and felt that there was confusion at the end of the air course where it turned into the main passage ahead of the flames. A second torch exploded, scattering the fire far down the course. The man, breathless and exhausted, ran up with the wrench. Then they felt the air in the air course stop moving. They looked at one another. "Yes," said the man with the wrench, "I told 'em to reverse the fans and when we got the water turned on we'd hold the fire from going to the other end of the passage." He said this between gasps as he tugged at the water plug with the wrench. He hit it a vicious blow and the cap broke.

The fan had reversed. The air was rushing back, bringing the flames to the barn. They beat the fire madly with their coats, but in two minutes the roaring air had brought the flames upon them. The loose timber and shavings in the barn were beginning to blaze and the men ran for their lives down the air course. As they ran for the south passage, the smoke followed them and they felt it in their eyes and

lungs. The lights behind them were dimmed, and those in front grew dim. They reached the passage in a cloud of smoke, but it was going up the air shaft and did not fill the passage. "Mugs," yelled Grant to a boy driving an ore car, "run down this passage and tell the men there's a fire—where's your father?"

"He's up yon way," called the boy, pointing in the opposite direction as he ran. "You tell him." The fire was roaring down the air course behind them, and Grant and the three men knew that in a few minutes the reverse air would be sucking the flames up the air shaft, cutting off the emergency escape for the men on the first and second levels.

Grant knew that the emergency escape was not completed for the third level, but he knew that they were using the air chute for a temporary hoist for the men from the third level and that the main shaft was not running to the third level.

"Run down this passage, Bill," called Grant. "Get all those fellows. Evans, you call the first level; I'll skin down this rope to the men below." In an instant, as the men were flying on their errands, his red head disappeared down the rope into the darkness. At the bottom of the hoist in the third level Grant found forty or fifty men at work. They were startled to see him come down without waiting for the bucket to go up and he called breathlessly as his feet touched the earth: "Boys, there's a fire above on the next level—I don't know how bad it is; but it looks bad to me. They may get it out with a hose from the main bottom—if they've got hose there that will reach any place."

"Let's go up," cried one of the men. As they started toward him, Grant threw up his hand.

"Hold on now, boys—hold on. The fans will be blowing that fire down this air shaft in a few minutes. How far up have you got the ladders?" he asked.

Some one answered: "Still twelve feet shy." There was a scramble for the buckets, but no one offered to man the windlass and hoist them up the air shaft. Grant was only a carpenters' boss. The men around the buckets were miners. But he called: "Get out of there, Hughey and Mike—none of that. We must make that ladder first—

get some timbers—put the rungs three feet apart, and work quick."

He pointed at the timbers to be used for the ladders, stepped to the windlass and cried:

"Here, Johnnie—you got no family—get hold of this windlass with me. Ready now—family men first—you, Sam —you, Edwards—you, Lewellyn."

Then he bent to the wheel and the men in the bucket started up the shaft. The others pounded at the ladder, and those who could find no work clambered up the stairs to the bottom of the gap that separated them from the second level. As the men in the buckets were nearly up to the second level, where the hoist stopped, Grant heard one of them call: "Hurry, hurry—here she comes," and a second later a hot, smoky wind struck his face and he knew the fan was turned again and soon would be blowing fire down the air course.

The men had the ladder almost finished. The men above on the stairs smelled the smoke and began yelling. The bucket reached the top and was started down. Grant looked up the air shaft and saw the fire—little flickering flames lighting up the shaft near the second level. The air rushing down was smoky and filled with sparks. The ladder was ready and the men made a rush with it up the stairway. Most of their lamps were put out and it was dark in the stairway. The men were uttering hysterical, foolish cries as they rushed upward in their panic. The ladder jolting against the sides of the chamber knocked the men off their feet and there was tumbling and swearing and tripping and struggling.

Grant grabbed the ladder from the men and held it above his head, and called out:

"You men go up there in order. You'll not get the ladder till you straighten up."

The emergency passage was filling with smoke. The men were coughing and gasping.

Up and down the stairs men called:

"Brace up, that's right."

"Red's right."

"We'll all go if we don't straighten up."

In a moment there was some semblance of order, and Grant wormed his way to the top holding the ladder above him. He put one end of it on a landing and nailed the foot of the ladder to the landing floor. Then he stood on the landing, a great, powerful man with blazing eyes, and called down: "Now come; one at a time, and if any man crowds I'll kill him. Come on—one at a time." One came and went up; when he was on the third rung of the ladder, Grant let another man pass up, and so three men were on the ladder.

As the top man raised the trapdoor above, Grant and those upon the ladder could see the flames and a great gust of smoke poured down. The man at the top hesitated. On the other side of the partition in the air chute the smoke was pouring and the fire was circling the top of the emergency escape through which the men must pass.

"Go ahead or jump down," yelled Grant.

Those on the ladder and on the landing who could see up cried:

"Quick, for God's sake! Hurry!"

And in another second the first man had scrambled through the hole, letting the trapdoor fall upon the head of the scrambling man just under him. He fell, but Grant caught him, and shoved him into the next turn upon the ladder.

After that they learned to lift their hands up and catch the trapdoor, but they could see the flames burning the timbers and dropping sparks and blowing smoke down the emergency shaft. Ten men went up; the fire in the flume along the stairs below them was beginning to whip through the board partition. The fan was pumping the third level full of smoke; it was carried out of the stairway by the current. But the men were calling below. Little Ira Dooley tried to go around Grant ahead of his turn at the ladder. The cheater felt the big man's hand catch him and hold him. The men below saw Grant hit the cheater upon the point of the jaw and throw him half conscious under the ladder. The men climbed steadily up. Twenty-five went through the trap-door into the unknown hell raging above. Again and again the ladder emptied itself, as the

flames in the shaft grew longer, and the circle of fire above grew broader. The men passed through the trapdoor with scorching clothes.

The ladder was filling for the last time. The last man was on the first rung. Grant reached under the ladder, caught Dooley about the waist and started up with him. On the ladder Dooley regained consciousness, and Grant shoved him ahead and saw Dooley slip through the trapdoor and then stop in the smoke and fire and stand holding up the door for Grant. The two men smiled through the smoke, and as Grant came through with his clothes afire, he and Dooley looked quickly about them. Their lights were out; but the burning timbers above gave them their directions. They headed down the south passage, but even as they entered it the flames barred them there. Then they turned to go up the passage, and could hear men calling and yelling far down in the dark alley. The torches were gone. Far ahead through the stifling smoke that swirled about the damp timbers overhead, they could see the flickering lights of men running. They started to follow the lamps. Dooley, who was a little man, slowly dropped back. Grant caught his hand and dragged him. Soon they came up to the others, who paused to give them lights. Then they all started to run again, hoping to come out of that passage into the main bottom by the main shaft in another quarter of a mile. Occasionally a man would begin to lag, but some one always stopped to give him a hand. Once Grant passed two men, Tom Williams and Evan Davis, leaning against a timber, Davis fagged, Williams fanning his companion with his cap.

From some cross passage a group of men who worked on the second level came rushing to them. They had no lights and were lost. Down the passage they all ran together, and at the end they saw something cluttering it up. The opening seemed to be closed. The front man tumbled and fell; a dozen men fell over him. Three score men were trapped there, struggling in a pile of pipes and refuse timber that all but filled the passage into the main bottom. Five minutes were lost there. Then by twos they crawled into the main bottom. There men were working with hose, trying to put out the fire in the air course leading to the mule

stables. They did not realize that the other end of the mine was in flames.

Coal was still going up in the cages. The men in the east and west passages were still at work. Smoke thickened the air. The entrance to the air course was charred, and puffing smoke. The fans relaxed for a moment upon a signal to cease until the course was explored. A hose was playing in the course, but no man had ventured down it. When Grant came out he called to the men with the cage boss: "Where's Kinnehan—where's the pit boss?" No one knew. Some little boys—trimmers and drivers—were begging to go up with the coal. Finally the cage boss let them ride up.

While they were wrangling, Grant said: "Lookee here—this is a real fire, men; stop spitting on that air course with the hose and go turn out the men."

The men from the third level were clamoring at the cage boss to go up.

Grant stopped them: "Now, here—let's divide off, five in a squad and go after the men on this level, and five in a squad go up to the next level and call the men out there. There's time if we hurry to save the whole shift." He tolled them off and they went down the glimmering passages, that were beginning to grow dim with smoke. As he left the main bottom he saw by his watch under a torch that it was nearly eleven o'clock. He ran with his squad down the passage, calling out the men from their little rooms. Three hundred yards down the smoke grew denser. And he met men coming along the passage.

"Are they all out back of you?" he called to the men as they passed. "Yes," they cried, "except the last three or four rooms."

Grant and his men pushed forward to these rooms. As they went they stumbled over an unconscious form in the passage. The men behind Grant—Dooley, Hogan, Casper Herdicker, Williams, Davis, Chopini—joined him. Their work was done. They had been in all the rooms. They picked up the limp form, and staggered slowly back down the passage. The smoke gripped Grant about the belly like a vise. He could not breathe. He stopped, then crawled a few feet, then leaned against a timber. Finally he rose and

came upon the swaying group with the unconscious man. Another man was down, and three men were dragging two.

The smoke kept rolling along behind them. It blackened the passage ahead of them. Most of the lights the men carried were out. Grant lent a hand, and the swaying procession crawled under the smoke. They went so slowly that one man, then two on their hands and knees, then three more caught up with them and they were too exhausted to drag the senseless man with them. At a puddle in the way they soused the face of the prostrated man in the water. That revived him. They could hear and feel another man across the passage calling feebly for help. Grant and Chopini, speaking different languages, understood the universal call of distress, and together crawled in the dark and felt their way to the feeble voice. Chopini reached the voice first. Grant could just distinguish in the darkness the powerful movement of the Italian, with his head upon the ground like a nosing dog's as he wormed under the fallen body and got it on his back and bellied over to the group that was slowly moving down the passage toward the glimmering light. As they passed the rooms vacated by the miners, sometimes they put their heads in and got refreshing air, for the smoke moved in a slow, murky current down the passage and did not back into the rooms at first.

Grant and Chopini crawled on all fours into a room, and found the air fresh. They rose, holding each other's hands. They leaned together against the dark walls and breathed slowly, and finally their diaphragms seemed to be released and they breathed more deeply. By a hand signal they agreed to start out. At the door they crouched and crawled. A few yards further they found the little group of a dozen men feebly pushing on. Seven were trying to drag five. Further down the passage they could hear the shrill cries of the men in the main bottom, as they came hurrying from the other runways, and far back up the dark passage behind them they could hear the roar of flames. They saw that they were trapped. Behind them was the fire. Before them was the long, impossible stretch to the main bottom, with the smoke thickening and falling lower every second. So thick

was the smoke that the light ahead winked out. Death stood before them and behind them.

"Boys—" gasped Grant, "in here—let's get in one of these rooms and wall it up."

The seven looked at him and he crawled to a room; sticking his head in he found it murky. He tried another. The third room was fresh and cool, and he called the men in.

Then all nine dragged one after another of the limp bodies into the room and they began walling the door into the passage. There were two lights on a dozen caps. Grant put out one lamp and they worked by the glimmer of a single lamp. Gradually, but with a speed—slow as it had to be—inspired by deadly terror, the wall went up. They daubed it with mud that seemed to refresh itself from a pool that was hollowed in the floor. After what seemed an age of swiftly accurate work, the wall was waist high; the smoke bellied in, in a gust, and was suddenly sucked out by an air current, and the men at the wall tapping some spring of unknown energy bent frantically to their task. Three of the six men were coming to life. They tried to rise and help. Two crawled forward, and patted the mud in the bottom crevices. The fierce race with death called out every man's reserves of body and soul.

Then, when the wall was breast high, some one heard a choking cry in the passage. Grant was in the rear of the room, wrestling with a great rock, and did not hear the cry; but Chopini was over the wall, and Dooley followed him, and Evans followed him in an instant. They disappeared down the passage, and when Grant returned, carrying the huge rock to the speeding work at the wall, he heard a voice outside call:

"We've got 'em."

And then, after a silence, as the workmen hurried with the wall, there came a call for help. Williams and Dennis Hogan followed Grant through the hole now nearing the roof of the room, out into the passage. The air was scorching. Some current was moving it rapidly. The second party came upon the first struggling weakly with Dick Bowman and his son. Father and son were unconscious and one of the rescuing party had fainted. Again the vise

gripped Grant's abdomen, and he put his face upon the damp earth and panted. Slowly the three men in the darkness bellied along until they felt the wall, then in an agony of effort raised themselves and their burden. Up the wall they climbed to their knees, to their feet, and met the hands of those inside who took the burden from them. One, two, three whiffs of clean air as they stuck their heads in the room, and they were gone—and another two men from the room followed them. They came upon the first party working their gasping, fainting course back to the wall, with their load, rolling a man before them. And they all pulled and tugged and pushed and some leaned heavily upon others and all looked death squarely in the face and no man whimpered. The panic was gone; the divine spark that rests in every human soul was burning, and life was little and cheap in their eyes, compared with the chance they had to give it for others.

Flicks of fire were swirling down the passage, and the roar of the flames came nearer and Grant fancied he could hear the crackle of it. Chopini was on his knees clutching at the crevices in the wall; Hogan and Dooley dug with their hands into the chinks, then four men were on their feet, with the burden, and in the blackness, hands within the wall reached out and took the man from those outside. The hands reached out and felt other hands and pulled them up, and five, six men stood upon their feet and were pulled, scrambling and trembling and reeling, into the room. The blackness outside became a lurid glare. The flickering lamp inside showed them that one man was outside. Grant Adams stood faint and trembling, leaning against a wall of the room; the room and the men whirled about him and he grew sick at the stomach. But with a powerful effort he gathered himself, and lunged to the hole in the rising wall. He was trying to pull himself up when Dooley pulled him down, and went through the hole like a cat. Hogan followed Dooley and Evans followed Hogan. "Here he is, right at the bottom," called Hogan, and in an instant the feet of Casper Herdicker, then the sprawling legs, then the body and then the head with the closed eyes and gaping mouth came in, and then three men slowly followed him. Grant,

revived by the water from the puddle under him, stood and saw the last man—Dennis Hogan—crawl in. Then Grant, seeing Hogan's coat was afire, looked out and saw flames dancing along the timbers, and a spark with a gust of smoke was sucked into the room by some eddy of the current outside. In a last spurt of terrible effort the hole in the wall was closed and plastered with mud and the men were sealed in their tomb.

It was but a matter of minutes before the furnace was raging outside. The men in the room could hear it crackle and roar, and the mud in the chinks steamed. The men daubed the chinks again and again.

As the fire roared outside, the men within the room fancied—and perhaps it was the sheer horror of their situation that prompted their fancy—that they could hear the screams of men and mules down the passage toward the main bottom. After an hour, when the roar ceased, they were in a great silence. And as the day grew old and the silence grew deep and the immediate danger past, they began to wait. As they waited they talked. At times they heard a roaring and a crash and they knew that the timbers having burned away, the passages and courses were caving in. By their watches they knew that the night was upon them. And they sat talking nervously through the night, fearing to sleep, dreading what each moment might bring. Lamp after lamp burned out in turn. And still they sat and talked. Here one would drowse—there another lose consciousness and sink to the ground, but always men were talking. The talk never ceased. They were ashamed to talk of women while they were facing death, so they kept upon the only other subjects that will hold men long—God and politics. The talk droned on into morning, through the forenoon, into the night, past midnight, with the thread taken from one man sinking to sleep by another waking up, but it never stopped. The water that seeped into the puddle on the floor moistened their lips as they talked. There was no food save in two lunch buckets that had been left in the room by fleeing miners, and thus went the first day.

The second day the Welsh tried to sing—perhaps to stop the continual talk of the Irish. Then the Italian sang some-

thing, Casper Herdicker sang the "Marseillaise" and the men clapped their hands, in the twilight of the last flickering lamp that they had. After that Grant called the roll at times and those who were awake felt of those who were asleep and answered for them, and a second day wore into a third.

By the feeling of the stem of Grant Adams's watch as he wound it, he judged that they had lived nearly four days in the tomb. Little Mugs Bowman was crying for food, and his father was trying to comfort him, by giving him his shoe leather to chew. Others rolled and moaned in their sleep, and the talk grew unstable and flighty.

Some one said, "Hear that?" and there was silence, and no one heard anything. Again the talk began and droned unevenly along.

"Say, listen," some one else called beside the first man who had heard the sound.

Again they listened, and because they were nervous perhaps two or three men fancied they heard something. But one said it was the roar of the fire, another said it was the sound of some one calling, and the third said it was the crash of a rock in some distant passageway. The talk did not rise again for a time, but finally it rose wearily, punctuated with sighs. Then two men cried:

"Hear it! There it is again!"

And breathless they all sat, for a second. Then they heard a voice calling, "Hello—hello?" And they tried to cheer.

But the voice did not sound again, and a long time passed. Grant tried to count the minutes as they ticked off in his watch, but his mind would not remain fixed upon the ticking, so he lost track of the time after three minutes had passed. And still the time dragged, the watch kept ticking.

Then they heard the sound again, clearer; and again it called. Then Dick Bowman took up a pick, called:

"Watch out, away from the wall, I'm going to make a hole."

He struck the wall and struck it again and again, until he made a hole and they cried through it:

"Hello—hello— We're here." And they all tried to

get to the hole and jabber through it. Then they could hear hurrying feet and voices calling, and confusion. The men called, and cried and sobbed and cheered through the hole, and then they saw the gleam of a lantern. Then the wall crumbled and they climbed into the passage. But they knew, who had heard the falling timbers and the crashing rocks, for days, that they were not free.

The rescuers led the imprisoned miners down the dark passage; Grant Adams was the last man to leave the prison. As he turned an angle of the passage, a great rock fell crashing before him, and a head of dirt caught him and dragged him under. His legs and body were pinioned. Dennis Hogan in front heard the crash, saw Grant fall, and stood back for a moment, as another huge rock slid slowly down and came to rest above the prostrate man. For a second no one moved. Then one man—Ira Dooley—slowly crept toward Grant and began digging with his hands at the dirt around Grant's legs. Then Casper Herdicker and Chopini came to help. As they stood at Grant's head, quick as a flash, the rock fell and the two men standing at Grant's head were crushed like worms. The roof of the passage was working wickedly, and in the flickering light of the lanterns they could see the walls shudder. Then Dick Bowman stepped out. He brought a shovel from a room opening on the passage, and Evan Davis and Tom Williams and Jamey McPherson with shovels began working over Grant, who lay white and frightened, watching the squirming wall above and blowing the dropping dirt from his face as it fell.

"Mugs, come here," called Dick Bowman. "Take that shovel," commanded the father, "and hold it over Grant's face to keep the dirt from smothering him." The boy looked in terror at the roof dropping dirt and ready to fall, but the father glared at the son and he obeyed. No one spoke, but four men worked—all that could stand about him. They dug out his body; they released his legs, they freed his feet, and when he was free they helped him up and hurried him down the passage which he had traversed four days ago. Before they turned into the main bottom room, he was sick with the stench. And as he turned into that room, where the cage landed, he saw by the lantern lights and by

the flaring torches held by a dozen men, a great congregation of the dead—some piled upon others, some in attitudes of prayer, some shielding their comrades in death, some fleeing and stricken prone upon the floor, some sitting, looking the foe in the face. Men were working with the bodies—trying to sort them into a kind of order; but the work had just begun.

The weakened men, led by their rescuers, picked their way through the corpses and went to the top in a cage. Far down in the shaft, the daylight cut them like a knife. And as they mounted higher and higher, they could hear the murmur of voices above them, and Grant could hear the sobs of women and children long before he reached the top. The word that men had been rescued passed out of the shaft house before they could get out of the cage, and a great shout went up.

The men walked out of the shaft house and saw all about them, upon flat cars, upon the dump near the shaft, upon buildings around the shaft house, a great crowd of cheering men and women, pale, drawn, dreadful faces, illumined by eager eyes. Grant lifted his eyes to the crowd. There in a carriage beside Henry Fenn, Grant saw Margaret staring at him, and saw her turn pale and slide down into her husband's arms, as she recognized Grant's face among those who had come out of death. Then he saw his father and little Kenyon in the crowd and he dashed through the thick of it to them. There he held the boy high in the air, and cried as the little arms clung about his neck.

The great hoarse whistles roared and the shrill siren whistles screamed and the car bells clanged and the church bells rang. But they did not roar and scream and peal and toll for money and wealth and power, but for life that was returned. As for the army of the dead below, for all their torture, for all their agony and the misery they left behind for society to heal or help or neglect—the army of the dead had its requiem that New Year's eve, when the bells and whistles and sirens clamored for money that brings wealth, and wealth that brings power, and power that brings pleasure, and pleasure that brings death—and death?—and death?

The town had met death. But no one even in that place of mourning could answer the question that the child heard in the bells. And yet that divine spark of heroism that burns unseen in every heart however high, however low—that must be the faltering, uncertain light which points us to the truth across the veil through the mists made by our useless tears.

And thus a New Year in Harvey began its long trip around the sun, with its sorrows and its joys, with its merry pantomime and its mutes mourning upon the hearse, with its freight of cares and compensations and its sad ironies. So let us get on and ride and enjoy the journey.

CHAPTER XVII

A CHAPTER WHICH INTRODUCES SOME POSSIBLE GODS

WHEN Grant Adams had told and retold his story to the reporters and had eaten what Dr. Nesbit would let him eat, it was late in the afternoon. He lay down to sleep with the sun still shining through the shutters in his low-ceiled, west bed room. Through the night his father sat or slept fitfully beside him and when the morning sun was high, and still the young man slept on, the father guarded him, and would let no one enter the house. At noon Grant rose and dressed. He saw the Dexters coming down the road and he went to the door to welcome them. It seemed at first that the stupor of sleep was not entirely out of his brain. He was silent and had to be primed for details of his adventure. He sat down to eat, but when his meal was half finished, there came bursting out of his soul a flame of emotion, and he put down his food, turned half around from the table, grasped the edges of the board with both hands and cried as a fanatic who sees a vision:

"Oh, those men,—those men—those wonderful, beautiful souls of men I saw!—those strong, fearless, Godlike men!—there in the mine, I mean. Evan Davis, Dick Bowman, Pat McCann, Jamey McPherson, Casper Herdicker, Chopini—all of them; yes, Dennis Hogan, drunk as he is sometimes, and Ira Dooley, who's been in jail for hold-ups—I don't care which one—those wonderful men, who risked their lives for others, and Casper Herdicker and Chopini, who gave their lives there under the rock for me. My God, my God!"

His voice thrilled with emotion, and his arms trembled as his hands gripped the table. Those who heard him did not stop him, for they felt that from some uncovered spring in his being a section of personality was gushing forth that *never* had seen day. He turned quietly to the wondering

child, took him from his chair and hugged him closely to a man's broad chest and stroked the boyish head as the man's blue eyes filled with tears. Grant sat for a moment looking at the floor, then roughed his red mane with his fingers and said slowly and more quietly, but contentiously:

"I know what you don't know with all your religion, Mr. Dexter; I know what the Holy Ghost is now. I have seen it. The Holy Ghost is that divine spark in every human soul—however life has smudged it over by circumstance—that rises and envelopes a human creature in a flame of sacrificial love for his kind and makes him joy to die to save others. That's the Holy Ghost—that's what is immortal."

He clenched his great hickory fist and hit the table and lifted his face again, crying: "I saw Dennis Hogan walk up to Death smiling that Irish smile. I saw him standing with a ton of loose dirt hanging over him while he was digging me out! I saw Evan Davis—little, bow-legged Evan Davis—go out into the smoke alone—alone, Mr. Dexter, and they say Evan is a coward—he went out alone and brought back Casper Herdicker's limp body hugged to his little Welsh breast like a gorilla's—and saved a man. I saw Dick Bowman do more—when the dirt was dropping from the slipping, working roof into my mouth and eyes, and might have come down in a slide—I lay there and watched Dick working to save me and I heard him order his son to hold a shovel over my face—his own boy." Grant shuddered and drew the child closer to him, and looked at the group near him with wet eyes. "Ira Dooley and Tom Williams and that little Italian went on their bellies, half dead from the smoke, out into death and brought home three men to safety, and would have died without batting an eye—all three to save one lost man in that passage." He beat the table again with his fist and cried wildly: "I tell you that's the Holy Ghost. I know those men may sometimes trick the company if they can. I know Ira Dooley spends lots of good money on 'the row'; I know Tom gambles off everything he can get his hands on, and that the little Dago probably would have stuck a knife in an enemy over a quarter. But that doesn't count."

The young man's voice rose again. "That is circum-

stance; much of it is surroundings, either of birth or of this damned place where we are living. If they cheat the company, it is because the company dares them to cheat and cheats them badly. If they steal, it is because they have been taught to steal by the example of big, successful thieves. I've had time to think it all out.

"Father—father!" cried Grant, as a new wave of emotion surged in from the outer bourne of his soul, "you once said Dick Bowman sold out the town and took money for voting for the Harvey Improvement bond steal. But what if he did? That was merely circumstance. Dick is a little man who has had to fight for money all his life—just enough money to feed his hungry children. And here came an opportunity to get hold of—what was it?—a hundred dollars—" Amos Adams nodded. "Well, then, a hundred dollars, and it would buy so much, and leading citizens came and told him it was all right—men we have educated with our taxes and our surplus money in universities and colleges. And we haven't educated Dick; we've just taught him to fight—to fight for money, and to think money will do everything in God's beautiful world. So Dick took it. That was the Dick that man and Harvey and America made, father, but I saw the Dick that God made!" He stopped and cried out passionately, "And some day, some day all the world must know this man—this great-souled, common American—that God made!"

Grant's voice was low, but a thousand impulses struggled across his features for voice and his eyes were infinitely sad as he gazed at the curly, brown hair of the child in his arms playing with the buttons on his coat.

The minister looked at his wife. She was wet-faced and atremble, and had her hands over her eyes. Amos Adams's old, frank face was troubled. The son turned upon him and cried:

"Father—you're right when you say character makes happiness. But what do you call it—surroundings—where you live and how you live and what you do for a living—environment! That's it, that's the word—environment has lots and lots to do with character. Let the company reduce its dividends by giving the men a chance at decent living conditions,

in decent houses and decent streets, and you'll have another sort of attitude toward the company. Quit cheating them at the store, and you'll have more honesty in the mines; quit sprinkling sour beer and whiskey on the sawdust in front of the saloons to coax men in who have an appetite, and you'll have less drinking—but, of course, Sands will have less rents. Let the company obey the law—the company run by men who are pointed out as examples, and there'll be less lawlessness among the men when trouble comes. Why, Mr. Dexter, do you know as we sat down there in the dark, we counted up five laws which the company broke, any one of which would have prevented the fire, and would have saved ninety lives. Trash in the passage leading to the main shaft delayed notifying the men five minutes—that's against the law. Torches leaking in the passageway where there should have been electric lights—that's against the law. Boys—little ten-year-olds working down there—cheap, cheap!" he cried, "and dumping that pine lumber under a dripping torch—that's against the law. Having no fire drill, and rusty water plugs and hose that doesn't reach—that's against the law. A pine partition in an air-chute using it as a shaft—that's against the law. Yet when trouble comes and these men burn and kill and plunder—we'll put the miners in jail, and maybe hang them, for doing as they are taught a thousand times a week by the company—risking life for their own gain!"

Grant Adams rose. He ran his great, strong, copper-freckled hands through his fiery hair and stood with face transfigured, as the face of one staring at some phantasm. "Oh, those men—they risked their lives—Chopini and Casper Herdicker gave their lives for me. Father," he cried, "I am bought with a price. These men risked all and gave all for me. I am theirs. I have no other right to live except as I serve them." He drew a deep breath; set his jaw and spoke with all the force he could put into a quiet voice: "I am dedicated to men—to those great-souled, brave, kind men whom God has sent here for man to dwarf and ruin. They have bought me. I am theirs."

The minister put the question in their minds:

"What are you going to do, Grant?"

The fervor that had been dying down returned to Grant Adams's face.

"My job," he cried, "is so big I don't know where to take hold. But I'm not going to bother to tell those men who sweat and stink and suffer under the injustices of men, about the justice of God. I've got one thing in me bigger'n a wolf —it's this: House them—feed them, clothe them, work them —these working people—and pay them as you people of the middle classes are housed and fed and paid and clad, and crime won't be the recreation of poverty. And the Lord knows the work of the men who toil with their hands is just as valuable to society as preaching and trading and buying and selling and banking and editing and lawing and doctoring, and insuring and school teaching."

He stood before the kitchen stove, a tall, awkward, bony, wide-shouldered, loose-wired creature in the first raw stage of full-blown manhood. The red muscles of his jaw worked as his emotions rose in him. His hands were the hands of a fanatic—never still.

"I've been down into death and I've found something about life," he went on. "Out of the world's gross earnings we're paying too much for superintendence, and rent and machines, and not enough for labor. There's got to be a new shake-up. And I'm going to help. I don't know where nor how to begin, but some way I'll find a hold and I'm going to take it."

He drew in a long breath, looked around and smiled rather a ragged, ugly smile that showed his big teeth, all white and strong but uneven.

"Well, Grant,' said Mrs. Dexter, "you have cut out a big job for yourself." The young man nodded soberly.

"Well, we're going to organize 'em, the first thing. We talked that over in the mine when we had nothing else to talk about—but God and our babies."

In the silence that followed, Amos Adams said: "While you were down there of course I had to do something. So after the paper was out, I got to talking with Lincoln about things. He said you'd get out. Though," smiled the old man sheepishly and wagged his beard, "Darwin didn't think

you would. But anyway, they all agreed we should do something for the widows."

"They have a subscription paper at George Brotherton's store—you know, Grant," said Mr. Dexter.

"Well—we ought to put in something, father,—all we've got, don't you think?"

"I tried and tried to get her last night to know how she felt about it," mused Amos. "I've borrowed all I can on the office—and it wouldn't sell for its debts."

"You ought to keep your home, I think," put in Mrs. Dexter quickly, who had her husband's approving nod.

"They told me," said the father, "that Mary didn't feel that way about it. I couldn't get her. But that was the word she sent."

"Father," said Grant with the glow in his face that had died for a minute, "let's take the chance. Let's check it up to God good and hard. Let's sell the house and give it all to those who have lost more than we. We can earn the rent, anyway."

Mrs. Dexter looked significantly at Kenyon.

"No, that shouldn't count, either," said Grant stubbornly. "Dick Bowman didn't let his boy count when I needed help, and when hundreds of orphaned boys and girls and widows need our help, we shouldn't hold back for Kenyon."

"Grant," said the father when the visit was ended and the two were alone, "they say your father has no sense—up town. Maybe I haven't. I commune with these great minds; maybe they too are shadows. But they come from outside of me." He ran his fingers through his graying beard and smiled. "Mr. Left brings me things that are deeper and wiser than the things I know—it seems to me. But they all bear one testimony, Grant; they all tell me that it's the spiritual things and not the material things in this world that count in the long run, and, Grant, boy," the father reached for his son's strong hand, "I would rather have seen the son that has come back to me from death, go back to death now, if otherwise I never could have seen him. They told me your mother was with you. And now I know some way she touched your heart out there in

the dark—O Grant, boy, while you spoke I saw her in your face—in your face I saw her. Mary—Mary," cried the weeping old man, "when you sent me back to the war you looked as he looked to-day, and talked so."

"Father," said Grant, "I don't know about your Mr. Left. He doesn't interest me, as he does you, and as for the others—they may be true or all a mockery, for anything I know. But," he exclaimed, "I've seen God face to face and I can't rest until I've given all I am—everything—everything to help those men!"

Then the three went out into the crisp January air—father and son and little Kenyon bundled to the chin. They walked over the prairies under the sunshine and talked together through the short winter afternoon. At its close they were in the timber where the fallen leaves were beginning to pack against the tree trunks and in the ravines. The child listened as the wind played upon its harp, and the rhythm of the rising and falling tide of harmony set his heart a-flutter, and he squeezed his father's fingers with delight. A redbird flashing through the gray and brown picture gave him joy, and when it sang far down the ravine where the wind organ seemed to be, the child's eyes brimmed and he dropped behind the elders a few paces to listen and be alone with his ecstasy. And so in the fading day they walked home. The quail piped for the child, and the prairie chicken pounded his drum, and in the prairie grass the slanting sun painted upon the ripples across the distant, rolling hills many pictures that filled the child's heart so full that he was still, as one who is awed with a great vision. And it was a great vision that filled his soul: the sunset with its splendors, the twilight hovering in the brown woods, the prairie a-quiver with the caresses of the wind, winter-birds throbbing life and ecstasy into the picture, and above and around it all a great, warm, father's heart symbolizing the loving kindness of the infinite to the child's heart.

CHAPTER XVIII

OUR HERO RIDES TO HOUNDS WITH THE PRIMROSE HUNT

GOING home from the Adamses that afternoon, John Dexter mused: "Curious—very curious." Then he added: "Of course this phase will pass. Probably it is gone now. But I am wondering how fundamental this state of mind is, if it will not appear again—at some crisis later in life."

"His mother," said Mrs. Dexter, "was a strong, beautiful woman. She builded deep and wide in that boy. And his father is a wise, earnest, kindly man, even if he may be impractical. Why shouldn't Grant do all that he dreams of doing?"

"Yes," returned the minister dryly. "But there is life—there are its temptations. He is of the emotional type, and the wrong woman could bend him away from any purpose that he may have now. Then, suppose he does get past the first gate—the gate of his senses—there's the temptation to be a fool about his talents if he has any—if this gift of tongues we've seen to-day should stay with him—he may get the swelled head. And then," he concluded sadly, "at the end is the greatest temptation of all—the temptation that comes with power to get power for the sake of power."

The next morning Amos Adams and Grant went in to Market Street to sell their home. Grant seemed a stranger to that busy mart of trade: the week of his absence had taken him so far from it. His eyes were caught by two tall figures, a man and a woman, walking and talking as they crossed the street—the man in a heavy, long, brown ulster, the woman in a flaring red, outer garment. He recognized them as Margaret Fenn and Thomas Van Dorn. They had met entirely by chance, and the meeting was one of perhaps half a dozen chance meetings which they had enjoyed during the winter, and these meetings were so entirely pleasurable

that the man was beginning rather vaguely to anticipate them—to hope for another meeting after the last. Grant was in an exalted mood that morning, and the sight of the two walking together struck him only as a symbol and epitome of all that he was going into the world to fight—in the man intellect without moral purpose, in the woman materialism, gross and carnal. The Adamses went the rounds of the real estate dealers trying to sell their home, and in following his vision Grant forgot the two tall figures in the street.

But the two figures that had started Grant's reverie continued to walk—perhaps a trifle slower than was the wont of either, down Market Street. They walked slowly for two reasons: For her part, she wished to make the most of a parade on Market Street with so grand a person as the Judge of the District Court, and the town's most distinguished citizen; and for his part, he dawdled because life was going slowly with him in certain quarters: he felt the lack of adventure, and here—at least, she was a stunning figure of a woman! "Yes," she said, "I heard about them. Henry has just told me that Mr. Brotherton said the Adamses are going to sell their home and give it to the miners' widows. Isn't it foolish? It's all they've got in the world, too! Still, really nothing is strange in that family. You know, I boarded with them one winter when I taught the Prospect School. Henry says they want to do something for the laboring people," she added naïvely.

As she spoke, the man's eyes wandered over her figure, across her face, and were caught by her eyes that looked at him with something in them entirely irrelevant to the subject that her lips were discussing. His eyes caught up the suggestion of her eyes, and carried it a little further, but he only said: "Yes—queer folks—trying to make a whistle—"

"Out of a pig's tail," she laughed. But her eyes thought his eyes had gone just a little too far, so they drooped, and changed the subject.

"Well, I don't know that I would say exactly a pig's tail," he returned, bracketing his words with his most engaging smile, "but I should say out of highly refractory material."

His eyes in the meantime pried up her eye-lids and asked

what was wrong with that. And her eyes were coy about it, and would not answer directly.

He went on speaking: "The whole labor trouble, it seems to me, lies in this whistle trade. A smattering of education has made labor dissatisfied. The laboring people are trying to get out of their place, and as a result we have strikes and lawlessness and disrespect for courts, and men going around and making trouble in industry by 'doing something for labor.'"

"Yes," she replied, "that is very true."

But her eyes—her big, liquid, animal eyes were saying, "How handsome you are—you man—you great, strong, masterful man with your brown ulster and brown hat and brown tie, and silken, black mustache." To which his eyes replied, "And you—you are superb, and such lips and such teeth," while what he trusted to words was:

"Yes—I believe that the laborer in the mines, for instance, doesn't care so much about what we would consider hardship. It's natural to him. It would be hard for us, but he gets used to it! Now, the smelter men in that heat and fumes—they don't seem to mind it. The agonizing is done largely by these red-mouthed agitators who never did a lick of work in their lives."

Their elbows touched for a moment as they walked. He drew away politely and her eyes said:

"That's all right: I didn't mind that a bit." But her lips said: "That's what I tell Mr. Fenn, and, anyway, the work's got to be done and cultivated people can't do it. It's got to be done by the ignorant and coarse and those kind of people."

His eyes flinched a little at "those kind" of people and she wondered what was wrong. But it was only for a moment that they flinched. Then they told her eyes how fine and desirable she looked, and she replied eyewise with a droop such as the old wolf might have used in replying to Red Riding Hood, "The better to eat you, my child." Then his voice spoke; his soft, false, vain, mushy voice, and asked casually: "By the way, speaking of Mr. Fenn—how is Henry? I don't see him much now since he's quit the law and gone into real estate."

His eyes asked plainly: Is everything all right in that quarter? Perhaps I might—

"Oh, I guess he's all right," and her eyes said: That's so kind of you, indeed; perhaps you might—

But he went on: "You ought to get him out more—come over some night and we'll make a hand at whist. Mrs. Van Dorn isn't much of a player, but like all poor players, she enjoys it." And the eyes continued: But you and I will have a fine time—now please come—soon—very soon.

"Yes, indeed—I don't play so well, but we'll come," and the eyes answered: That is a fair promise, and I'll be so happy. Then they flashed quickly: But Mrs. Van Dorn must arrange it. He replied: "I'll tell Mrs. Van Dorn you like whist, and she and you can arrange the evening."

Then they parted. He walked into the post office, and she walked on to the Wright & Perry store. But instead of returning to his office, he lounged into Mr. Brotherton's and sat on a bench in the Amen Corner, biting a cigar, waiting for traffic to clear out. Then he said: "George, how is Henry Fenn doing—really?"

His soft, brown hat was tipped over his eyes and his ulster, unbuttoned, displayed his fine figure, and he was clearly proud of it. Brotherton hesitated while he invoiced a row of books.

"Old trouble?" prompted Judge Van Dorn.

"Old trouble," echoed Mr. Brotherton—"about every three months since he's been married; something terrible the last time. But say—there's a man that's sorry afterwards, and what he doesn't buy for her after a round with the joy-water isn't worth talking about. So far, he's been able to square her that way—I take it. But say—that'll wear off, and then—" Mr. Brotherton winked a large, mournful, devilish wink as one who was hanging out a storm flag. Judge Van Dorn twirled his mustache, patted his necktie, jostled his hat and smiled, waiting for further details. Instead, he faced a question:

"Why did Henry quit the law for real estate, Judge—the old trouble?"

Judge Van Dorn echoed, and added: "Folks pretty gen-

erally know about it, and they don't trust their law business in that kind of hands. Poor Henry—poor devil," sighed the young Judge, and then said: "By the way, George, send up a box of cigars—the kind old Henry likes best, to my house. I'm going to have him and the missus over some evening."

Mr. Brotherton's large back was turned when the last phrase was uttered, and Mr. Brotherton made a little significant face at his shelves, and the thought occurred to Mr. Brotherton that Henry Fenn was not the only man whom people pretty generally knew about. After some further talk about Fenn and his affairs, Van Dorn primped a moment before the mirror in the cigar cutter and started for the door.

"By the by, your honor, I forgot about the Mayor's miners' relief fund. How is it now?" asked Van Dorn.

"Something past ten thousand here in the county."

"Any one beat my subscription?" asked Van Dorn.

Brotherton turned around and replied: "Yes—Amos Adams was in here five minutes ago. He has mortgaged his place and so long as he and Grant can't find kith or kin of Chopini, and Mrs. Herdicker would take nothing—Amos has put $1,500 into the fund. Done it just now—him and Grant."

The Judge took the paper, looked at the scrawl of the Adamses, and scratching out his subscription, put two thousand where there had been one thousand. He showed it to Brotherton, and added with a smile:

"Who'll call that—I wonder."

And wrapping his ulster about him and cocking his hat rakishly, he went with some pride into the street. He was thirty-four years old and was accounted as men go a handsome dog, with a figure just turning from the litheness of youth into a slight rotundity of very early middle age. He carried his shoulders well, walked with a firm, straight gait—perhaps a little too much upon his toes for candor, but, with all, he was a well-groomed animal and he knew it. So he passed Margaret Fenn again on the street, lifted his hat, hunted for her eyes, gave them all the voltage he had, and the smile that he shot at her was left over on his face for

half a block down the street. People passing him smiled back and said to one another:

"What a fine, good-natured, big-hearted fellow Tom Van Dorn is!"

And Mr. Van Dorn, not oblivious to the impression he was making, smiled and bowed and bowed and smiled, and hellowed Dick, and howareyoued Hiram, and goodmorninged John, down the street, into his office. There he found his former partner busy with a laudable plan of defending a client. His client happened to be the Wahoo Fuel Company, which was being assailed by the surviving relatives of something like one hundred dead men. So Mr. Calvin was preparing to show that in entering the mine they had assumed the ordinary risks of mining, and that the neglect of their fellow servants was one of those ordinary risks. And as for the boy ten years old being employed in the mines contrary to law, there were some details of a trip to Austria for that boy and his parents, that had to be arranged with the steamship company by wire that very morning. The Judge sat reading the law, oblivious—judicially—to what was going on, and Joseph Calvin fell to work with a will. But what the young Judge, who could ignore Mr. Calvin's activities, could not help taking judicial notice of in spite of his law books, were those eyes out there on the street. They were indeed beautiful eyes and they said so much, and yet left much to the imagination—and the imagination of Judge Van Dorn was exceedingly nimble in those little matters, and in many other matters besides. Indeed, so nimble was his imagination that if it hadn't been for the fact that at Judge Van Dorn's own extra-judicial suggestion, every lawyer in town, excepting Henry Fenn, who had retired from the law practice, had been retained by the Company an hour after the accident, no one knows how many holes might have been found in Mr. Joseph Calvin's unaided brief.

As the young Judge sat poring over his law book, Captain Morton came in and after the Captain's usual circumlocution he said:

"What I really wanted to know, Judge, was about a charter. I want to start a company. So I says to myself, Judge Tom, he can just about start me right. He'll

get my company going—what say?" Answering the Judge's question about the nature of the company, the Captain explained: "You see, I had the agency for the Waverly bicycle here a while back, and I got one of their wheels and was fooling with it like a fellow will on a wet day—what say?" He smiled up at the Judge a self-deprecatory smile, as if to ask him not to mind his foolishness but to listen to his story. "And when I got the blame thing apart, she wouldn't go together—eh? So I had to kind of give up the agency, and I took a churn that was filling a long-felt want just then. Churns is always my specialty and I forgot all about the bicycle—just like a fellow will—eh? But here a while back I wanted to rig up a gearing for the churn and so I took down the wreck of the old wheel, and dubbing around I worked out a ball-bearing sprocket joint—say, man, she runs just like a feather. And now what I want is a patent for the sprocket and a charter for the company to put it on the market. Henry Fenn's going to the capital for me to fix up the charter; and then whoopee—the old man's coming along, eh? When I get that thing on the market, you watch out for me—what say?"

The eyes of Margaret Fenn danced around the Captain's sprocket. So the Judge, thinking to get rid of the Captain and oblige the Fenns with one stroke, sent the Captain away with twenty-five dollars to pay Henry Fenn for getting the patent for the sprocket and securing the charter for the company.

As the Captain left the office of the Judge he greeted Mrs. Van Dorn with an elaborate bow.

And now enter Laura Van Dorn. And she is beautiful, too—with candid, wide-open gray eyes. Maturity has hardly reached her, but through the beauty of line and color, character is showing itself in every feature; Satterthwaite and Nesbit, force and sentiment are struggling upon her features for mastery. The January air has flushed her face and her frank, honest eyes glow happily. But when one belongs to the ancient, though scarcely Honorable Primrose Hunt, and rides forever to the hounds down the path of dalliance, one's wife of four years is rather stale sport. One does not pry up her eyelashes; they have been pried;

nor does one hold dialogues with her under the words of conventional speech. The rules of the Hunt require one to look up at one's wife—chiefly to find out what she is after and to wonder how long she will inflict herself. And when one is hearing afar the cry of the pack, no true sportsman is diverted from the chase by ruddy, wifely cheeks, and beaming, wifely eyes, and an eager, wifely heart. So when Laura his wife came into the office of the young Judge she found his heart out with the Primrose Hunt and only his handsome figure and his judicial mind accessible to her. "Oh, Tom," she cried, "have you heard about the Adamses?" The young Judge looked up, smiled, adjusted his judicial mind, and answered without emotion: "Rather foolish, don't you think?"

"Well, perhaps it's foolish, but you know it's splendid as well as I. Giving up everything they had on earth to soften the horror in South Harvey—I'm so proud of them!"

"Well," he replied, still keeping his chair, and letting his wife find a chair for herself, "you might work up a little pride for your husband while you're at it. I gave two thousand. They only gave fifteen hundred."

"Well—you're a dear, too." She touched him with a caressing hand. "But you could afford it. It means for you only the profits on one real estate deal or one case of Joe Calvin's in the Federal Court, where you can still divide the fees. But, Tom—the Adamses have given themselves—all they have—themselves. It's a very inspiring thing; I feel that it must affect men in this town to see that splendid faith."

"Laura," he answered testily, "why do you still keep up that foolish enthusiasm for perfectly unreasonable things? There was no sense in the Adamses giving that way. It was a foolish thing to do, when the old man is practically on the town. His paper is a joke. Sooner or later we will all have to make up this gift a dollar at a time and take care of him."

He turned to his law book. "Besides, if you come to that—it's money that talks and if you want to get excited, get excited over my two thousand. It will do more good than their fifteen hundred—at least five hundred dollars more. And that's all there is to it."

Her face twitched with pain. Then from some depths of her soul she hailed him impulsively:

"Tom, I don't believe that, and I don't believe you do, either—it isn't the good the money does those who receive; it's the good it does the giver. And the good it does the giver is measured by the amount of sacrifice—the degree of himself that he puts into it—can't you understand, Tom? I'd give my soul if you could understand."

"Well, I can't understand, Laura," impatiently; "that's your father's sentimental side. Of all the fool things," the Judge slapped the book sheet viciously, "that the old man has put into your head—sentiment is one of the foolest. I tell you, Laura, money talks. There are ten languages spoken in South Harvey, and money talks in all of them, and one dollar does as much as another, and that's all there is to it."

She rose with a little sigh. "Well," she said gently, "we won't quarrel." The wife looked intently at the husband, and in that flash of time from beneath her consciousness came renewed strength. Something primeval—the eternal uxorial upon which her whole life rested, possessed her and she smiled, and touched her husband's thick, black hair gently. For she felt that if the spiritual ties for the moment had failed them, she must pick up some other tie. She was the nest builder indomitable. If the golden thread should drop—there is the string—the straw—the horse hair—the twig. So Laura Van Dorn picked up an appeal to her husband's affections and continued her predestined work.

"Tom," she said, with her smile still on her face, "what I really and truly wanted to tell you was about Lila." The mention of the child's name brought quick light to the mother's face. "Lila—think of it, Tom—Lila," the mother repeated with vast pride. "You must come right out and see her. About an hour ago, she sat gazing at your picture on my dresser, and suddenly without a word from me, she whispered 'Daddy,' and then was as shy for a moment, then whispered it again, and then spoke it out loud, and she is as proud as Punch, and keeps saying it over and over! Tom—you must come out and hear it."

Perhaps it was a knotty point of law that held his mind,

or perhaps it was the old beat of the hoofs on the turf of the Primrose Hunt that filled his ears, or the red coat of the fox that filled his eyes.

He smiled graciously and replied absently: "Well—Daddy—" And repeated "Daddy—don't you think father is—" He caught the cloud flashing across her face, and went on: "Oh, I suppose daddy is all right to begin with." He picked up his law book and the woman drew nearer to him. She put her hand over the page and coaxed:

"Come on, Tom—just for a little minute—come on out and see her. I know she is waiting for you—I know she is just dying to show off to you—and besides, the new rugs have come for the living-room, and I just couldn't unpack them without you. It would seem so—old—old—old marriedy, and we aren't going to be that." She laughed and tried to close the law book.

Their eyes met and she thought for a moment that she was winning her contest. But he put her hand aside gently and answered: "Now, Laura, I'm busy, exceedingly busy. This mine accident is bound to come before me in one form or another soon, and I must be ready for it, and it is a serious matter. There will be all kinds of attacks upon the property."

"The property?" she asked, and he answered:

"Why, yes—legal attacks upon the mine—to bleed the owners, and I must be ready to guard them against these assaults, and I just can't jump and run every time Lila coos or you cut a string on a package. I'll be out to-night and we'll hear Lila and look at the rugs." To the disappointment upon her face he replied: "I tell you, Laura, sentiment is going to wreck your life if you don't check it."

The man looked into his book without reading. He had come to dislike these little scenes with his wife. He looked from his book out of the window, into the snowy street. He remembered his morning walk. There was no talk of souls in those eyes, no hint of higher things from those lips, no covert taunt of superiority in that face.

Laura did not wince. But her eyes filled and her voice was husky as she spoke: "Tom, I want your soul again—

the one that used to speak to me in the old days." She bent over him, and rubbed her cheek against his and there she left him, still looking into the street.

That evening at sunset, Judge Van Dorn, with his ulster thrown back to show his fine figure, walked in his character of town Prince homeward up the avenue. His face was amiable; he was gracious to every one. He spoke to rich and poor alike, as was his wont. As he turned into his home yard, he waved at a little face in the window. In the house he was the spirit of good nature itself. He was full of quips and pleasantries and happy turns of speech. But Laura Van Dorn had learned deep in her heart to fear that mood. She was ashamed of her wisdom—degraded by her doubt, and she fought with it.

And yet a man and a woman do not live together as man and wife and parents without learning much that does not come from speech and is not put into formulated conviction. The signs were all for trouble, and in the secret places of her heart she knew these signs.

She knew that this grand manner, this expansive mood, this keying up of attentions to her were the beginnings of a sad and sordid story—a story that she did not entirely understand; would not entirely translate, but a story that sickened her very soul. To keep the table talk going, she said: "Tom, it's wonderful the way Kenyon is taking to the violin. He has a real gift, I believe."

"Yes," answered the husband absently, and then as one who would plunge ahead, began: "By the by—why don't you have your father and mother and some of the neighbors over to play cards some evening—and what's the matter with the Fenns? Henry's kind of down on his luck, and I'll need him in my next campaign, and I thought if we could have them over some evening—well, what's the matter with to-morrow evening? They'd enjoy it. You know Mrs. Fenn—I saw her down town this morning, and George Brotherton says Henry's slipping back to his old ways. And I just thought perhaps—"

But she knew as well as he what he "thought perhaps," and a cloud trailed over her face.

When Thomas Van Dorn left his home that night, striding

into the lights of Market Street, his heart was hot with the glowing coals of an old wrong revived. For to Judge Van Dorn, home had become a trap, and the glorious eyes that had beamed upon him in the morning seemed beacons of liberty.

As gradually those eyes became fixed in his consciousness, through days and weeks and months, a mounting passion for Margaret Fenn kindled in his heart. And slowly he went stone-blind mad. The whole of his world was turned over. Every ambition, every hope, every desire he ever had known was burned out before this passion that was too deep for desire. Whatever lust was in his blood in those first months of his madness grew pale. It seemed to the man who went stalking down the street past her house night after night that the one great, unselfish passion of his life was upon him, loosening the roots of his being, so that any sacrifice he could make, whether of himself or of any one or anything about him, would give him infinite joy. When he met Henry Fenn, Van Dorn was always tempted and often yielded to the temptation to rush up to Fenn with some foolish question that made the sad-eyed man stare and wonder. But just to be that near to her for the moment pleased him. There was no jealousy for Fenn in Van Dorn's heart; there was only a dog-like infatuation that had swept him away from his reason and seated a fatuous, chattering, impotent, lecherous ape where his intellect should have been. And he knew he was a fool. He knew that he was stark mad. Yet what he did not know was that this madness was a culmination, not a pristine passion new born in his heart. For the maggot in his brain had eaten out a rotten place wherein was the memory of many women's yieldings, of many women's tears. One side of his brain worked with rare cunning. He wound the evidence against the men in the mine, taken at the coroner's hearing, through the labyrinth of the law, and snared them tightly in it. That part of his brain clicked with automatic precision. But sitting beside him was the ape, grinning, leering, ready to rise and master him. So many a night when he was weary, he lay on the couch beside his desk, and the ape came and howled him to a troubled sleep.

But while Judge Van Dorn tried to fight his devil away with his law book, down in South Harvey death still lingered. Death is no respecter of persons, and often vaunts himself of his democracy. Yet it is a sham democracy. In Harvey, when death taps on a door and enters the house, he brings sorrow. But in South Harvey when he crosses a threshold he brings sorrow and want. And what a vast difference lies between sorrow, and sorrow with want. For sometimes the want that death brings is so keen that it smothers sorrow, and the poor may not mourn without shame—shame that they feel the self-interest in their sorrow. So when Death entered a hundred homes in South Harvey that winter day at the beginning of the new year, with him came hunger, with him came cold, with him came the harlot's robe and the thief's mask, and the blight of ignorance, and the denial of democratic opportunity to scores of children. With death that day as he crossed the dreary, unpainted portals of the poor came horror that overshadows grief among the poor and makes the boast of the democracy of death a ruthless irony.

CHAPTER XIX

HEREIN CAPTAIN MORTON FALLS UNDER SUSPICION AND HENRY FENN FALLS FROM GRACE

ON Market Street nearly opposite the Traders' National Bank during the decades of the eighties and nineties was a smart store front upon which was fastened a large, black and gold sign bearing the words "The Paris Millinery Company" and under these words in smaller letters, "Mrs. Brunhilde Herdicker, Prop." If Mr. George Brotherton and his Amen Corner might be said to be the clearing house of public opinion in Harvey, the establishment of Mrs. Brunhilde Herdicker, Prop., might well be said to be the center of public clamor. For things started in this establishment—by things one means in general, trouble; variegated of course as to domestic, financial, social, educational, amatory, and at times political. Now the women of Harvey and South Harvey and of Greeley county—and of Hancock and Seymour counties so far as that goes—used the establishment of "The Paris Millinery Company, Mrs. Brunhilde Herdicker, Prop.," as a club—a highly democratic club—the only place this side of the grave, in fact, where women met upon terms of something like equality.

And in spring when women molt and change their feathers, the establishment of "Mrs. Brunhilde Herdicker, Prop." at its opening rose to the dignity of a social institution. It was a kind of folk-mote. Here at this opening, where there was music and flowers and bonbons, women assembled en masse. Mrs. Nesbit and Mrs. Fenn, Mrs. Dexter and Violet Hogan, she that was born Mauling met, if not as sisters at least in what might be called a great step-sister*hood;* and even the silent Lida Bowman, wife of Dick, came

from her fastness and for once in a year met her old friends who knew her in the town's early days before she went to South Harvey to share the red pottage of the Sons of Esau!

But her friends had little from Mrs. Bowman more than a smile—a cracked and weather-beaten smile from a broken woman of nearly forty, who was a wife at fifteen, a mother at seventeen, and who had borne six children and buried two in a dozen years.

"There's Violet," ventured Mrs. Bowman to Mrs. Dexter. "I haven't seen her since her marriage."

To a question Mrs. Bowman replied reluctantly, "Oh—as for Denny Hogan, he is a good enough man, I guess!"

After a pause, Mrs. Bowman thought it wise to add under the wails of the orchestra: "Poor Violet—good hearted girl's ever lived; so kind to her ma; and what with all that talk when she was in Van Dorn's office and all the talk about the old man Sands and her in the Company store, I just guess Vi got dead tired of it all and took Denny and run to cover with him."

Violet Hogan in a black satin,—a cheap black satin, and a black hat—a cheap black hat with a red rose—a most absurdly cheap red rose in it, walked about the place picking things over in a rather supercilious way, and no one noticed her. Mrs. Fenn gave Violet an eye-brow, a beautifully penciled eye-brow on a white marble forehead, above beaming brown eyes that were closed just slightly at the moment. And Mrs. Van Dorn who had kept track of the girl, you may be sure, went over to her and holding out her hand said: "Congratulations, Violet,—I'm so glad to hear—" But Mrs. Denny Hogan having an eye-brow to spare as the gift of Mrs. Fenn passed it on to Mrs. Van Dorn who said, "Oh—" very gently and went to sit on a settee beside Mrs. Brotherton, the mother of the moon-faced Mr. Brotherton and Mrs. Ahab Wright, who always seemed to seek the shade. And then and there, Mrs. Van Dorn had to listen to this solo from Mrs. Brotherton:

"George says Judge Van Dorn is running for Judge again: really, Laura, I hope he'll win. George says he will. George says Henry Fenn is the only trouble Mr. Van Dorn will have, though I don't see as Henry could do

much. Though George says he will. George says Henry is cranky and mean about the Judge someway and George says Henry is drinking like a fish this spring and his legs is hollow, he holds so much; though he must have been joking for I have heard of hollow horn in cattle, but I never heard of hollow legs, though they are getting lots of new diseases."

By the time Mrs. Brotherton found it necessary to stop for breath, Laura Van Dorn had regained the color that had dimmed as she heard the reference to Henry Fenn. And when she met Mrs. Margaret Fenn at a turn of the aisle, Mrs. Margaret Fenn was the spirit of joy and it seemed that Mrs. Van Dorn was her long lost sister; so Mrs. Margaret Fenn began fumbling her over to find the identifying strawberry mark. At least that is what Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., told Mrs. Nesbit as she sold Mrs. Nesbit the large one with the brown plume.

Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., made it a rule never to gossip, as every one who frequented her shop was told, but as between old friends she would say to Mrs. Nesbit that if ever one woman glued herself to another, and couldn't be boiled or frozen, or chopped loose, that woman was Maggie Fenn sticking to Laura Van Dorn. And Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., closed her mouth significantly, and Mrs. Nesbit pretended with a large obvious, rather clumsy pretense, that she read no meaning in Mrs. Herdicker's words. The handsome Miss Morton, with her shoe tops tiptoeing to her skirts, who was in the shop and out of school for the rush season, listened hard, but after that they whispered and the handsome Miss Morton turned her attention to the youngest Miss Morton who was munching bonbons and opening the door for all of Harvey and South Harvey and the principalities around about to enter and pass out. After school came the tired school teachers from the High School, her eldest sister, Emma Morton, among them, with their books and reports pressed against their sides. But Margaret Fenn did not see the school teachers, nor even the fifth Mrs. Sands towed about by her star-eyed stepdaughter Anne, though Margaret Fenn's eyes were busy. But she was watching the women; she was looking for something as though to ward it off, always glancing ahead of her to see where she was going,

and who was in her path; always measuring her woman, always listening under the shriek of the clarionettes, always quick with a smile—looking for something—something that she may have felt was upon its way, something that she dreaded to see. But all the shoulders she hobnobbed with that day were warm enough—indifferently warm, and that was all she asked. So she smiled and radiated her fine, animal grace, her feline beauty, her superfemininity, and was as happy as any woman could be who had arrived at an important stage of her journey and could see a little way ahead with some degree of clearness.

Let us look at her as she stands by the door waiting to overhaul Mrs. Nesbit. A fine figure of a woman, Margaret Fenn makes there—in her late twenties, with large regular features, big even teeth, clear brown eyes—not bold at all, yet why do they seem so? Perhaps because she is so sure and firm and unhesitating. Her skin is soft and fair as a child's, bespeaking health and good red blood. The good red blood shows in her lips—red as a wicked flower, red and full and as shameless as a dream. Taller than Mrs. Nesbit she stands, and her clothes hang to her in spite of the fullness of the fashion, in most suggestive lines. She seems to shine out of her clothes a lustrous, shimmering figure, female rather than feminine, and gorgeous rather than lovely. Margaret Fenn is in full bloom; not a drooping petal, not a bending stamen, not a wilted calyx or bruised leaf may be seen about her. She is a perfect flower whose whole being —like that of a flower at its full—seems eager, thrilling, burning with anticipation of the perfect fruit.

She puts out her hands—both of her large strong hands, so well-gloved and well-kept, to Mrs. Nesbit. Surely Mrs. Fenn's smile is not a make-believe smile; surely that is real pleasure in her voice; surely that is real joy that lights up her eyes. And why should they not be real? Is not Mrs. Nesbit the one person in all Harvey that Margaret Fenn would delight to honor? Is not Mrs. Nesbit the dowager empress of Harvey, and the social despot of the community? And is not Mrs. Nesbit smiling at the eldest Miss Morton, she of the Longfellow school, who is trying on a traveling hat, and explaining that she always wanted a traveling hat

and suit alike so that she could go to the Grand Canyon if she could ever save up enough money, but she could never seem to afford it? Moreover is not Mrs. Nesbit in a beneficient frame of mind?

"Well," smiles the eyes and murmurs the voice, and glows the face of the young woman, and she puts out her hand. "Mrs. Nesbit—so glad I'm sure. Isn't it lovely here? Mrs. Herdicker is so effective."

"Mrs. Fenn,—" this from the dowager, and the eyebrow that Mrs. Fenn gave to Mrs. Hogan, and Mrs. Hogan gave to Mrs. Van Dorn and Mrs. Van Dorn gave to Mrs. Brotherton and Mrs. Brotherton gave to Mrs. Calvin who, George says, is an old cat, and Mrs. Calvin gave to Mrs. Nesbit for remarks as to the biennial presence of Mr. Calvin in the barn (repeated to Mrs. Calvin), the eye-brow having been around the company comes back to Mrs. Fenn.

After which Mrs. Nesbit moves with what dignity her tonnage will permit out of the perfumed air, out of the concord of sweet sounds into the street. Mrs. Fenn, who was looking for it all the afternoon, that thing she dreaded and anticipated with fear in her heart's heart, found it. It was exceedingly cold—and also a shoulder of some proportions. And it chilled the flowing sap of the perfect flower so that the flower shivered in the breeze made by the closing door, though the youngest Miss Morton presiding at the door thought it was warm, and Mrs. Herdicker thought it was warm and Mrs. Violet Hogan said to Mrs. Bowman as they went through the same door and met the same air: "My land, Bowman, did you ever see such an oven?" and then as the door closed she added:

"See old Mag Fenn there? I just heard something about her to-day. I bet it's true."

Thus the afternoon faded and the women went home to cook their evening meals, and left Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., with a few late comers—ladies of no particular character who had no particular men folk to do for, and who slipped in after the rush to pay four prices for what had been left. Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., was straightening up the stock and snapping prices to the girls who were waiting upon the belated customers. She spent little of her talent upon the

sisterhood of the old, old trade, and contented herself with charging them all she could get, and making them feel she was obliging them by selling to them at all. It was while trade sagged in the twilight that Mrs. Jared Thurston, Lizzie Thurston to be exact, wife of the editor of the South Harvey *Derrick* came in. Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., knew her of old. She was in to solicit advertising, which meant that she was needing a hat and it was a swap proposition. So Mrs. Herdicker told Mrs. Thurston to write up the opening and put in a quarter page advertisement beside and send her the bill, and Mrs. Thurston looked at a hat. No time was wasted on her either—nor much talent; but as Mrs. Thurston was in a business way herself, Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., stopped to talk to her a moment as to an equal—a rare distinction. They sat on a sofa in the alcove that had sheltered the orchestra behind palms and ferns and Easter lilies, and chatted of many things—the mines, the new smelter, the new foreman's wife at the smelter, the likelihood that the Company store in South Harvey would put in a line of millinery—which Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., denied with emphasis, declaring she had an agreement with the old devil not to put in millinery so long as she deposited at his bank. Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., had taken the $500 which the Company had offered for the life of poor Casper and had filed no lawsuit, fearing that a suit with the Company would hurt her trade. But as a business proposition both women were interested in the other damage suits pending against the Company for the mine accident. "What do they say down there about it?" asked the milliner.

"Well, of course," returned Mrs. Thurston, who was not sure of her ground and had no desire to talk against the rich and powerful, "they say that some one ought to pay something. But, of course, Joe Calvin always wins his suits and the Judge, of course, was the Company's attorney before he was the Judge—"

"And so the claim agents are signing 'em up for what the Company will give," cut in the questioner.

"That's about it, Mrs. Herdicker," responded Mrs. Thurston. "Times are hard, and they take what they can get now, rather than fight for it. And the most the Com-

pany will pay is $400 for a life, and not all are getting that."

"Tom Van Dorn—he's a smooth one, Lizzie—he's a smooth one." Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., looked quickly at Mrs. Thurston and got a smile in reply. That was enough. She continued:

"You'd think he'd know better—wouldn't you?"

"Well, I don't know—it's hard to teach an old dog new tricks," was the non-committal answer of Mrs. Thurston, still cautious about offending the powers.

Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., brushed aside formalities. "Yes—stenographers and hired girls, and biscuit shooters at the Palace and maybe now and then an excursion across the track; but this is different; this is in his own class. They were both here this afternoon, and you should have seen the way she cooed and billed over Laura Van Dorn. Honest, Lizzie, if I'd never heard a word, I'd know something was wrong. And you should have seen old lady Nesbit give her the come-uppins."

Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., dropped her voice to a confidential tone. "Lizzie?" a pause; "They say you've seen 'em together."

The thought of the quarter page advertisement overcame whatever scruples Mrs. Thurston may have had, and so long as she had the center of the stage she said her lines: "Why I don't know a single thing—only this: that for—maybe a month or so every few days along about five or six o'clock when the roads are good I've seen him coming one way on his wheel, and go down in the country on the Adams road, and about ten minutes later from another way she'd come riding along on her wheel and go down the Adams road into the country following him. Then in an hour or so, they come back, sometimes one of them first—sometimes the other, but I've really never seen them together. She might be going to the Adamses; she boarded there once years ago."

"Yes,—and she hates 'em!" snapped Mrs. Herdicker derisively, and then added, "Well, it's none of my business so long as they pay for their hats."

"Well, my land, Mrs. Herdicker," quoth Lizzie, "it's a comfort to hear some one talk sense. For two months now we've been hearing nothing but that fool Adams boy's crazy talk about unions, and men organizing to help their fellows, and—why did you know he's quit his job as boss carpenter in the mine? And for why—so that he can be a witness against the company some say; though there won't be any trial. Tom Van Dorn will see to that. He's sent word to the men that they'd better settle as the law is against them. But that Grant Adams quit his job any way and is going about holding meetings every night, and working on construction work above ground by day and talking union, union, union till Jared and I are sick of it. I tell you the man's gone daft. But a lot of the men are following him, I guess."

Being a methodical woman Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., wrote the copy for her advertisement and let Mrs. Thurston go in peace. She went into the gathering twilight, and hurried to do a few errands before returning to South Harvey.

At the court house Mrs. Thurston met Henry Fenn coming out of the register of deeds office where he had been filing a deed to some property he had sold, and at Mr. Brotherton's Amen Corner, she saw Tom Van Dorn smoking upon the bench. The street was filled with bicycles, for that was a time when the bicycle was a highly respectable vehicle of business and pleasure. Mrs. Thurston left Market Street and a dozen wheels passed her. As she turned into her street to South Harvey a bell tinkled. She looked around and saw Margaret Fenn making rapidly for the highway. Mrs. Thurston was human; she waited! And in five minutes Tom Van Dorn came by and went in the same direction!

An hour later Margaret Fenn came pedaling into the town from the country road, all smiling and breathless and red lipped, and full of color. As she turned into her own street she met her husband, immaculately dressed. He bowed with great punctiliousness and lifting his hat high from his head smiled a search-light of a smile that frightened his wife. But he spoke no word to her. Five minutes later, as Tom Van Dorn wheeled out of Market Street, he also saw

Henry Fenn, standing in the middle of the crossing leering at him and laughing a drunken, foolish, noisy laugh. Van Dorn called back but Fenn did not reply, and the Judge saw nothing in the figure but his drunken friend standing in the middle of the street laughing.

CHAPTER XX

IN WHICH HENRY FENN FALLS FROM GRACE AND RISES AGAIN

THIS chapter must devote itself chiefly to a bargain. In the bargain, Judge Thomas Van Dorn is party of the first part, and Margaret Fenn, wife of Henry Fenn, is party of the second part, and the devil is the broker.

Tom Van Dorn laid hungry eyes upon Margaret Fenn; Margaret Fenn looked ravenously upon all that Van Dorn had; his talent, his position, his worldly goods, estates and chattels. He wanted what she had. He had what she wanted, and by way of commission in negotiating the bargain, the devil took two souls—not such large souls so far as that goes; but still the devil seems to have been the only one in the transaction who profited.

June came—June and the soft night wind, and the warm stars; June with its new, deep foliage and its fragrant grass and trees and flowers; June with a mocking bird singing through the night to its brooding mate; June came with its poets leaning out of windows into the night hearing love songs in the rhythmic whisper of lagging feet strolling under the shade of elms. And under cover of a June night, breathing in the sensuous meaning of the time like a charmed potion, Judge Van Dorn, who personated justice to twenty-five thousand people, went forth a slinking, cringing beast to woo!

Here and there a lamp blinked through the foliage. The footfalls of late home-comers were heard a long way off; the voices of singers—a serenading party out baying at the night—was heard as the breeze carried the music upon its sluggish ebb and flow. To avoid belated home-comers, Judge Van Dorn crossed the street; the clanging electric car did not find him with its search-light, though he felt shielded by its roar as he stepped over the iron railing about the Fenn home and came softly across the lawn upon the grass.

On the verandah, hidden by summer vines, he sat a moment alone, panting, breathless, though he had come up but four

steps, and had mounted them gently. A rustle of woman's garments, the creaking of a screen door, the perfume that he loved, and then she stood before him—and the next moment he had her in his arms. For a minute she surrendered without struggling, without protest, and for the first time their lips met. Then she warded him off.

"No—no, Tom. You sit there—I'll have this swing," and she slipped into a porch swing and finally he sat down.

"Now, Tom," she said, "I have given you everything tonight. I am entirely at your mercy; I want you to be as good to me as I have been to you."

"But, Margaret," he protested, "is this being good to me, to keep me a prisoner in this chair while you—"

"Tom," she answered, "there is no one in the house. I've just called Henry up by long distance telephone at the Secretary of State's office in the capitol building. I've called him up every hour since he got there this afternoon, to make him remember his promise to me. He hasn't taken a thing on this trip—I'm sure; I can tell by his voice, for one thing." The man started to speak. She stopped him: "Now listen, Tom. He'll have that charter for the Captain's company within half an hour and will start home on the midnight train. That will give us just an hour together —all alone, Tom, undisturbed."

She stopped and he sprang toward her, but she fended him off, and gave him a pained look and went on as he sank moaning into his chair: "Tom, dear, how should we spend the first whole hour we have ever had in our lives alone together? I have read and reread your beautiful letters, dear. Oh, I know some of them by heart. I am yours, Tom—all yours. Now, dear," he made a motion to rise, "come here by my chair, I want to touch you. But—that's all."

They sat close together, and the woman went on: "There are so many things I want to say, Tom, to-night. I wonder if I can think of any of them. It is all so beautiful. Isn't it?" she asked softly, and felt his answer in every nerve in his body, though his lips did not speak. It was the woman who broke the silence. "Time is slipping by, Tom. I know what's in your mind, and you know what's in mine. Where will this thing end? It can't go on this way. It must end

now, to-night—this very night, Tom, dear, or we must know where we are coming out. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Margaret," replied the man. He gripped his arm about her, and continued passionately, "And I'm ready." In a long minute of ecstasy they were dumb. He went on: "You have good cause—lots of cause—every one knows that. But I—I'll make it somehow—Oh, I can make it." He set his teeth fiercely, and repeated, "Oh, I'll make it, Margaret."

The night sounds filled their deaf ears, and the pressure of their hands—all so new and strange—filled them with joy, but the joy was shattered by a step upon the sidewalk, and until it died away they were breathless. Then they sat closer together and the woman whispered:

> "'And I'd turn my back upon things eternal
> To lie on your breast a little while.'"

A noise in the house, perhaps of the cat moving through the room behind them, startled them again. The man shook and the woman held her breath; then they both smiled. "Tom—Tom—don't you see how guilty we are? We mustn't repeat this; this is our hour, but we must understand each other here and now." The man did not reply. He who had taken recklessly and ruthlessly all of his life had come to a place where he must give to take. His fortunes were tied up in his answer, so he replied: "Margaret, you know the situation—down town?"

"The judgeship?" she asked.

"Yes."

"But that will be settled in November. After that is time enough. Oh, eternity is time enough, Tom—I can wait and wait and wait—only if it is to be for eternity, we must not reckon with it now."

"Oh, Margaret, Margaret, Margaret—my soul's soul—I want you. I know no peace but to look into your eyes; I know no heaven but your smile—no God but your possession, no hell but—but—this!" He pressed her hand to his lips and moaned a kind of human bellow of unrequited love—some long suppressed man's courting note that we had in the

forest, and he grasped her in a flood of passionate longing. She slipped away from him and stood up before him and said: "No,—No, no, my dear—my dear—I love you—Oh, I do love you, Tom—but don't—don't."

He started after her but she pushed him back with her powerful arms and held him. "Tom, don't touch me. Tom," she panted, "Tom." Her big meaningful eyes met his and she held him for a moment silent. He stepped back and she smiled and kissed his forehead when he had dropped into a chair.

"Now, Tom, time is slipping by. It's nearly midnight. We've got to talk sensibly and calmly. Sit here by me and be as sane as you can. We know we love one another. That's been said and resaid; that's settled. Now shall I first break for liberty—or will you? That must all be settled too. We can't just let things drift. I'm twenty-seven. You're thirty-five. Life is passing. Now when?"

They shrank before the light of a street car rounding the corner, that gleamed into their retreat. When it had gone, the man bowed his fine, proud, handsome head, and spoke with his eyes upon the ground:

"You go first—you have the best cause!" She looked upon his cowardly, sloping shoulders, and thought a moment. It was the tigress behind the flame who stooped over him. pondering, feeling her way through events that she had been going over and over in her imagination for weeks. The feline caution that guided her, told her, as it had always told her, that his letters were enough to damn him, but maybe not enough to hold him. She was not sure of men. Their standards might not be severe enough to punish him; he, knowing this, might escape. All this—this old query without answer went hurrying through her mind. But she was young; the spirit of adventure was in her. Henry Fenn, weak, vacillating, chivalrous, adoring Henry Fenn, had not conquered her; and the fire in her blood, and the ambition in her brain, came over her as a spell. She slipped to her knees, putting her head upon her lover's breast, and cried passionately in a guttural murmur—"Yes, I'll go first, Tom—now, for God's sake, kiss me—kiss me and run." Then she sprang up: "Now, go—go—go, Tom—run before

I take it back. Don't touch me again," she cried. "Go."

She slipped back into the door, then turned and caught him again and they stood for a terrible moment together. She whirled into the house, clicked the door after her and left him standing a-tremble, gaping and mad in the night. But she knew her strength, and knew his weakness and was not afraid.

She let him moan a wordless lovesong, very low and terrible in the night alone before the door, and did not answer. Then she saw him go softly down the steps, look up and down the street, move guiltily across the yard, hiding behind a bush at a distant footfall, and slip slowly into the sidewalk and go hurrying away from the house. In half an hour she was waiting for Henry Fenn as a cat might wait at a rat hole.

The next day little boys followed Henry Fenn about the streets laughing; Henry Fenn, drunken and debased, whose heart was bleeding. It was late in the afternoon when he appeared in the Amen Corner. His shooting stars were all exploded from their rocket and he was fading into the charred papier-mâche of the reaction that comes from over exhilaration. So he sat on the walnut bench, back of the newspaper counter with his hands on his knees and his eyes staring at the floor while traffic flowed through the establishment oblivious to his presence. Mr. Brotherton watched Fenn but did not try to make him talk. There came a time when trade was slack that Fenn looked for a minute fixedly at Mr. Brotherton, and finally said, shaking his head sadly:

"She says I've got to quit!" A pause and another sigh, then: "She says if I ever get drunk again, she'll quit me like a dog." Another inspection of the floor; more lugubrious head-shaking followed, after which the eyes closed and the dead voice spoke:

"Well, here's her chance. Say, George," he tried to smile, but the light only flickered in his leaden eyes. "I guess I'm orey-eyed enough now to furnish a correct imitation of a gentleman in his cups!"

Fenn got up, took Brotherton back among the books at the rear of the store. The drunken man took from his pocket a fountain pen incased in a silver mounting. He held the silver trinket up and said:

"Damn his soul to hell!"

"Let me see it—whose is it, Henry?" asked Brotherton. Fenn answered, "That's my business." He paused; then added "and his business." Another undecided moment, and then Fenn concluded: "And none of your business."

Suddenly he took his hands off the big man, and said, "I'm going home. If she means business, here's her chance."

Brotherton tried to stop him, but Fenn was insistent. Customers were coming in, and so Brotherton let the man go. But all the evening he was worried about his friend. Absentmindedly he went over his stock, straightening up *Puck* and *Judge* and *Truth* and *Life*, and putting the magazines in their places, sorting the new books into their shelf, putting the standard pirated editions of English authors in their proper place and squaring up the long rows of "The Bonnie Brier Bush" and "A Hazard of New Fortunes" where they would catch the buyers' eyes upon the counter, in freshly jostled ranks, even and inviting, after the day's havoc in Harvey's literary circles. But always Fenn's face was in Brotherton's mind. The chatter of the evening passed without Brotherton realizing what it was all about. As for instance, between Grant Adams and Captain Morton over a sprocket which the Captain had invented and Henry Fenn had patented for the Captain. Grant on the other hand kept trying to tell the Captain about his unions organizing in the Valley, and neither was interested in what the other said, yet each was bursting with the importance of what he was saying. But even that comic dialogue could not take Mr. Brotherton's mind from the search of the sinister connection it was trying to discover, between the fountain pen and Henry Fenn.

So Brotherton, worried with the affairs of Fenn, was not interested and the Captain peddled his dream in other marts. With Fenn's ugly face on his mind, Brotherton saw young Judge Van Dorn swing in lightly, go through his daily pantomime, all so smoothly, so well oiled, so polished and polite, so courtly and affable, that for the moment Brotherton laid aside his fears and abandoned his suspicions. Then Van Dorn, after playing with his cigar, went to the

stationery counter and remarked casually, "By the by, George, do you keep fountain pens?"

Mr. Brotherton kept fountain pens, and Judge Van Dorn said: "There—that one over by the ink eraser—yes, that one—the one in the silver casing—I seem to have mislaid mine. Yale men gave it to me at the reunion in '91, as president of the class—had my initials on it—ten years—yes," he looked at the pen offered by the store keeper. "That will do." Mr. Brotherton watched the Judge as he put the pen in his vest pocket, after it had been filled.

The Judge picked up a Chicago paper, stowed it away with "Anglo-Saxon Supremacy" in his green bag. Then he swung gracefully out of the shop and left Mr. Brotherton wondering where and how Henry Fenn got that pen, and why he did not return it to its owner.

The air of mystery and malice—two unusual atmospheres for Henry Fenn to breathe—which he had put around the pen, impressed his friend with the importance of the thing.

"A mighty smooth proposition," said Grant Adams, sitting in the Amen Corner reading "A Hazard of New Fortunes," when Van Dorn had gone.

"Well, say, Grant," returned Mr. Brotherton, pondering on the subject of the lost pen. "Sometimes I think Tom is just a little too oleaginous—a little too oleaginous," repeated Mr. Brotherton, pleased with his big word.

That June night Henry Fenn passed from Congress Street and walked with a steady purpose manifest in his clicking heels. It was not a night's bat that guided his feet, no festive orgy, but the hard, firm footfall of a man who has been drunk a long time—terribly mean drunk. And terribly mean drunk he was. His eyes were blazing, and he mumbled as he walked. Down Market Street he turned and strode to the corner where the Traders' National Bank sign shone under the electrics. He looked up, saw a light burning in the office above, and suddenly changed his gait to a tip-toe. Up the stairs he crept to a door, under which a light was gleaming. He got a firm hold of the knob, then turned it quickly, thrust open the door and stepped quietly into the room. He grinned meanly at Tom Van Dorn who, glancing up over his shoulder from his book, saw the white

face of Fenn leering at him. Van Dorn knew that this was the time when he must use all the wits he had.

"Why, hello—Henry—hello," said Van Dorn cheerfully. He coughed, in an attempt to swallow the saliva that came rushing into his mouth. Fenn did not answer, but stood and then began to walk around Van Dorn's desk, eyeing him with glowing-red eyes as he walked. Van Dorn tipped back his chair easily, put his feet on the desk before him, and spoke: "Sit down, Henry—make yourself at home." He cleared his throat nervously. "Anything gone wrong, Henry?" he asked as the man stood over him glaring at him.

"No," replied Fenn. "No, nothing's gone wrong. I've just got some exhibits here in a law suit. That's all."

He stood over Van Dorn, peering steadfastly at him. First he laid down a torn letter. Van Dorn shuddered almost imperceptibly as he recognized in the crumpled, wrenched paper his writing, but smiled suavely and said: "Well?"

"Well," croaked Fenn passionately. "That's exhibit 'A.' I had to fight a hell-cat for it; and this," he added as he lay down the silver-mounted pen, "this is exhibit 'B.' I found that in the porch swing this morning when I went out to get my drink hidden under the house." He cackled and Van Dorn's Adam's apple bobbed like a cork upon a wave.

"And this," cried Fenn, as he pulled a revolver, "God damn you, is exhibit 'C.' Now, don't you budge, or I'll blow you to hell—and," he added, "I guess I'll do it anyway."

He stood with the revolver at Van Dorn's temple—stood over his victim growling like a raging beast. His finger trembled upon the trigger, and he laughed. "So you were going to have a convenient, inexpensive lady friend, were you, Tom!" Fenn cuffed the powerless man's jaw with an open hand.

"Private snap?" he sneered. "Well, damn your soul—here's a lady friend of mine," he poked the cold barrel harder against the trembling man's temple and cried: "Don't wiggle, don't you move." Then he went on: "Kiss her, you damned egg-sucking pup—when you've done flirting with this, I'm going to kill you."

He emphasized the "you," and prodded the man's face with the barrel.

"Henry," whispered Van Dorn, "Henry, for God's sake, let me talk—give me a show, won't you?"

Fenn moved the barrel of the revolver over between the man's eyes and cried passionately: "Oh, yes, I'll give you a show, Tom—the same show you gave me."

He shifted the revolver suddenly and pulled the trigger; the bullet bored a hole through the book on "Anglo-Saxon Supremacy" on the desk.

Fenn drew in a deep breath. With the shot he had spilled some vial of wrath within him, though Van Dorn could not see the change that was creeping into Fenn's haggard face.

"You see she'll shoot, Tom," said Fenn.

Holding the smoking revolver to the man's head, Fenn reached for a chair and sat down. His rage was ebbing, and his mind was clear. He withdrew the weapon a few inches, and cried:

"Don't you budge an inch."

His hand was limp and shaking, but Van Dorn could not see it. "Tom, Tom," he cried. "God help me—help me." He repeated twice the word "me," then he went on:

"For being what I am—only what I am—" he emphasized the "I."

"For giving in to your devil as I give into mine—for falling as I have fallen—on another road—I was going to kill you."

The revolver slipped from his hands. He picked it up by the barrel. He rose crying in a weak voice,

"Oh, Tom, Tom, Tom," Van Dorn was lifting up in his chair, "Tom, Tom, God help us both poor, hell-cursed men," sobbed Fenn, and then with a fearful blow he brought the weapon down and struck the white, false forehead that gleamed beneath Fenn's wet face.

He stood watching the man shudder and close his eyes, watching the blood seep out along a crooked seam, then gush over the face and fine, black hair and silken mustache. A bloody flood streamed there while he watched. Then Fenn wiped dry the butt of his revolver. He felt of the gash in the forehead, and found that the bone was not crushed. He

was sober, and an unnatural calm was upon his brain. He could feel the tears in his eyes. He stood looking at the face of the unconscious man a long, dreadful minute as one who pities rather than hates a foe. Then he stepped to the telephone, called Dr. Nesbit, glanced at the fountain pen and the crumpled letter, burst into a spasm of weeping, and tiptoed out of the room.

CHAPTER XXI

IN WHICH WE SEE A FAT LITTLE RASCAL ON THE RACK

A YEAR and a month and a day, an exceedingly hot day, after Judge Thomas Van Dorn had fallen upon the stair leading to his office and had cut that gash in his forehead which left the white thread of a scar upon his high, broad brow, Judge Van Dorn sat in chambers in his office in the court house, hearing an unimportant matter. Because the day was hot, the Judge wore a gray silk coat, without a vest, and because the matter was unimportant, no newspaper reporters were called in. The matter in hand was highly informal. The Judge, tilted back in his easy chair, toyed with his silken mustache, while counsel for defendant, standing by the desk before which the Judge's chair was swinging, handled the papers representing the defendant's answer, to the plaintiff's pleadings. The plaintiff herself, dressed in rather higher sleeves than would have been thought possible to put upon a human form and make them stand erect, with a rather larger hat than one would have said might be carried by a single human neck without bowing it; the plaintiff above mentioned was rattling the court's paper knife.

Plaintiff's counsel, a callow youth from the law offices of Joseph Calvin, to be exact, Joseph Calvin, Jr., sat meekly on the edge of a small chair in the corner and being a chip of the old block, had little to say. The court and said hereinbefore described plaintiff talked freely between whiles as the counsel for said defendant, Henry Fenn, ran over his papers, looking for particular phrases, statements or exhibits which he desired to present to the court.

It appeared from the desultory reading of the papers by the attorney for the said defendant, Henry Fenn, that he had no desire to impose upon the plaintiff, as above de-

scribed, any hardships in the matter and that the agreement reached by counsel as to the disposition of the joint property should be carried out as indicated in the answer submitted to the court—see folio No. 3. Though counsel for defendant smilingly told the court that if the counsel were Henry Fenn, he should not give up property worth at least five thousand dollars in consideration of the cause of action being made cruelty and inhuman treatment rather than drunkenness, but, as counsel explained and as the court agreed when a man gets to going by the booze route he hasn't much sense—referring, of course, to said defendant, Henry Fenn, not present in person.

When counsel for the said defendant had finished, and had put all his papers upon the desk in front of the court, the court reached into his desk, and handed the counsel for defendant a cigar, which with proper apologies to the hereinabove and before described plaintiff, counsel lighted, and said:

"That's certainly a good one."

But as the court was writing upon the back of one of the papers, the court did not respond for a moment, but finally said absently, "Yes,—glad you think so; George Brotherton imports them for me."

And went on writing. Still writing the court said without looking up, "I don't know of anything else."

And the counsel for defendant said he didn't either and putting on his hat, smiling at the plaintiff aforesaid, counsel for said defendant Henry Fenn departed, and after a minute the court ceased writing, folded and blotted the back of the paper, handed it to young Joe Calvin, sitting meekly on the edge of the chair, saying: "Here Joey, take this to the clerk and file it," and Joey got up from the edge of the chair and vanished, closing the door behind him.

"Well?" said the plaintiff.

"Well?" echoed the court.

"Well," reiterated the plaintiff, gazing into the eyes of the court with somewhat more eagerness than the law requires under statute therefore made and provided.

"So it's all over," she continued, and added: "My part."

She rose—this plaintiff hereinbefore mentioned, came to

the desk, stood over him a moment, and said softly, much more softly than the code prescribes, "Tom—I hope yours won't be any harder."

Whereupon the court, then and there being as herein above set forth, did with premeditation, and much show of emotion look up into the eyes of said plaintiff, said eyes being tear-dimmed and extraordinarily beautiful as to their coloring to-wit: brown, as to their expression towit: sad and full of love, and furthermore the court did with deliberation and after for a moment while he held the heavy bejeweled hand of said plaintiff above mentioned, and did press said hand to his lips and then did draw the said plaintiff closer and whisper:

"God—God, Margaret, so do I hope so—so do I."

And perhaps the court for a second thought of a little blue-eyed, fair-haired girl and a gentle woman who lived for him alone in all the world, and perhaps not; for this being a legal paper may set down only such matters as are of evidence. But it is witnessed and may be certified to that the court did drop his eyes for a second or two, that the white thread of a scar upon the forehead of the court did redden for a moment while he held the heavy bejewelled hand of plaintiff, hereinbefore mentioned, and that he did draw a deep breath, and did look out of the window, set high up in the court house, and that he did see the elm trees covering a home which, despite all his perfidy and neglect was full of love for him—love that needed no high sleeves nor great plumy hats, nor twinkling silver bangles, nor jangling gold chatelaines, to make it beautiful. But let us make it of record and set it down here, in this instrument that the court rose, looked into the great brown eyes and the fair face, and seeing the rich, shameless mouth and blazing color upon the features, did then and there fall down in his heart and worship that mask, and did take the hand that he held in both of his and standing before the woman did cry in a deep voice, full of agony:

"For God's sake, Margaret, let me come to you now—soon." And she—the plaintiff in this action gazed at the man who had been the court, but who now was man, and replied:

"Only when you may honestly—legally, Tom—it's best for both of us."

They walked to the door. The court pressed a button as she left, smiling, and when a man appeared with a note book the court said: "I have something to dictate," and the next day young Joseph Calvin handed the following news item to the *Harvey Times* and to the *South Harvey Derrick*.

"A divorce was granted to-day by Judge Thomas Van Dorn of the district court in chambers to Mrs. Margaret Müller Fenn, from Henry Fenn. Charges of cruel and inhuman treatment filed by the attorneys for Mrs. Fenn were not met by Mr. Fenn and the court granted the decree and it was made absolute. It is understood that a satisfactory settlement of the joint property has been made. Mrs. Fenn will continue to hold the position she has held during the year past as chief clerk in the office of the superintendent of the Harvey Improvement Company. Mr. Fenn is former county attorney and is now engaged in the insurance business, having sold his real estate business to Joseph Calvin this morning."

And thus the decree of divorce between Henry Fenn and Margaret, his wife, whom God had joined together, was made absolute, and further deponent sayeth not.

But the town of Harvey had more or less to say about the divorce and what the town said, more or less concerned Judge Thomas Van Dorn. For although Henry Fenn sober would not speak of the divorce, Henry Fenn drunk, babbled many quotations about the "rare and radiant maiden, who was lost forever more." He was also wont to quote the line about the lover who held his mistress "something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse."

As for the Judge, his sensitive mind felt the disapproval of the community. But the fighting blood in him was roused, and he fought a braver fight than the cause justified. That summer he went to all the farmers' picnics in his district, spoke wherever he was invited to speak, and spoke well; whatever charm he had he called to his aid. When the French of South Harvey celebrated the Fall of the Bastile, Judge Van Dorn spoke most beautifully of liberty, and led off when they sung the *Marseillaise;* on Labor Day he was

the orator of the occasion, and made a great impression among the workers by his remarks upon the dignity of labor. He quoted Carlyle and Ruskin and William Morris, and wept when he told them how the mob had crucified the Carpenter, who was labor's first prophet.

But one may say this for Judge Van Dorn: that with all his desire for the approval of his fellows, even in South Harvey, even at the meetings of men who he knew differed with him, he did not flinch from attacking on every occasion and with all his eloquence the unions that Grant Adams was promoting. The idea of mutual help upon which they rested seemed to make Van Dorn see red, and he was forever going out of his way to combat the idea. So bitter was his antagonism to the union idea that in the Valley he and Grant Adams became dramatized in the minds of the men as opponents.

But in Harvey, where men regarded Grant Adams's activities with tolerant indifference and his high talk of bettering industrial conditions as the madness of youth, Judge Van Dorn was the town's particular idol.

A handsome man he was as he stood out in the open under the bower made by the trees, and with the grace and charm of true oratory, spoke in his natural voice—a soft, penetrating treble that reached to the furthest man in the crowd; tall, well-built, oval-faced, commanding—a judge every inch of him, even if a young judge—was Tom Van Dorn. And when he had finished speaking at the Harvest Home Picnic, or at the laying of the corner stone of the new Masonic Temple, or at the opening of the Grant County fair, men said:

"Well, I know they say Tom Van Dorn is no Joseph, but all the same I'm here to tell you—" and what they were there to tell you would discourage ladies and gentlemen who believe that material punishments always follow either material or spiritual transgressions.

So the autumn wore into winter, and the State Bar Association promoted Judge Van Dorn; he appeared as president of that dignified body, and thereby added to his prestige at home. He appeared regularly at church with Mrs. Van Dorn —going the rounds of the churches punctiliously—and gave liberally when a subscription paper for any cause was pre-

sented. But for all this, he kept hearing the bees of gossip buzzing about him, and often felt their sting.

Day after day, through it all he never slept until in some way, by some device, through some trumped up excuse that seemed plausible enough in itself, he had managed to see and speak to Margaret Fenn. Whether in her office in the Light, Heat & Power Company's building upon a business errand, and he made plenty of such, or upon the street, or in the court house, where she often went upon some business of her chief, or walking home at evening, or coming down in the morning, or upon rare occasions meeting her clandestinely for a moment, or whether at some social function where they were both present—and it of necessity had to be a large function in that event—for the town could register its disapproval of the woman more easily than it could put its opprobrium upon the man; or whether he spoke to her just a word from the sidewalk as he passed her home, always he managed to see her. Always he had one look into her eyes, and so during all the day, she was in his thoughts. It seems strange that a man of great talents could keep the machinery of his mind going and still have an ever present consciousness of a guilty intrigue. Yet there it was. Until he had seen her and spoken to her, it was his day's important problem to devise some way to bring about the meeting. So with devilish caution and ponderous circumlocution and craft he went about his daily work, serene in the satisfaction that he was being successful in his elaborate deceit; rather gloating at times in the iniquity of one in his position being in so low a business. He wondered what the people would say if they really knew the depths of his infamy, and when he sentenced a poor devil for some minor crime, he would often watch himself as a third party and wonder if he would ever stand up and take his sentence. But he had no fear of that. The little drama between Judge Van Dorn, the prisoner at the bar, and the lover of Margaret Fenn, was for his diversion, rather than for his instruction, and he enjoyed it as an artistic travesty upon the justice he was dispensing.

Thomas Van Dorn believed that the world was full of a number of exceedingly pleasant things that might be had for the taking, and no questions asked. So when he felt the

bee sting of gossip, he threw back his head, squared his face to the wind, put an extra kink of elegance into his raiment, a tighter crimp into his smile and an added ardor into his hale greeting, did some indispensable judicial favor to the old spider of commerce back of the brass sign at the Traders National, defied the town, and bade it watch him fool it. But the men who drove the express wagons knew that whenever they saw Judge Van Dorn take the train for the capital they would be sure to have a package from the capital the next day for Mrs. Fenn; sometimes it would be a milliner's box, sometimes a jeweler's, sometimes a florist's, sometimes a dry-goods merchant's, and always a candy maker's.

At last the whole wretched intrigue dramatized itself in one culminating episode. It came in the spring. Dr. Nesbit had put on his white linens just as the trees were in their first gayety of foliage and the spring blooming flowers were at their loveliest.

After a morning in the dirt and grime and misery and injustice and wickedness that made the outer skin over South Harvey and Foley and Magnus and the mining and smelter towns of the valley, the Doctor came driving into the cool beauty of Quality Hill in Harvey with a middle aged man's sense of relief. South Harvey and its neighbors disheartened him.

He had seen Grant Adams, a man of the Doctor's own caste by birth, hurrying into a smelter on some organization errand out of overalls in his cheap, ill-fitting clothes, begrimed, heavy featured, dogged and rapidly becoming a part of the industrial dregs. Grant Adams in the smelter, preoccupied with the affairs of that world, and passing definitely into it forever, seemed to the Doctor symbolic of the passing of the America he understood (and loved), into an America that discouraged him. But the beauty and the calm and the restful elm-bordered lawns of Harvey, always toned up his spirits. Here, he said to himself was the thing he had helped to create. Here was the town he had founded and cherished. Here were the people whom he really loved—old neighbors, old friends, dear in associations and sweet in memories.

It was in a cherubic complaisance with the whole scheme of the universe that the white-clad Doctor jogged up Elm

Street behind his maternal sorrel in the phaëton, to get his noon day meal. He passed the Van Dorn home. Its beauty fitted into this mood and beckoned to him. For the whole joy of spring bloomed in flower and shrub and vine that bordered the house and clambered over the wide hospitable porch. The gay color of the spring made the house glow like a jewel. The wide lawn—the stately trees, the gorgeous flowers called to his heart, and seeing his daughter upon the piazza, the Doctor surrendered, drew up, tied the horse and came toddling along the walk to the broad stone steps, waving his hands gayly to her as he came. Little Lila, coming home from kindergarten and bleating through the house lamb-wise: "I'm hungry," saw her grandfather, and ran down the steps to meet him, forgetting her pangs.

He lifted her high to his shoulder, and came up the porch steps laughing: "Here come jest and youthful jollity, my dear," and stooping with his grandchild in his arms, kissed the beautiful woman before him.

"Some one is mighty sweet this morning," and then seeing a package beside her asked: "What's this—" looking at the address and the sender's name. "Some one been getting a new dress?"

The child pulling at her mother's skirts renewed her bleat for food. When Lila had been disposed of Laura sat by her father, took his fat, pudgy hand and said:

"Father, I don't know what to do; do you mind talking some things over with me. I suppose I should have been to see you anyway in a few days. Have we time to go clear to the bottom of things now?"

She looked up at him with a serious, troubled face, and patted his hand. He felt instinctively the shadow that was on her heart, and his face may have winced. She saw or knew without seeing, the tremor in his soul.

"Poor father—but you know it must come sometime. Let us talk it all out now."

He nodded his head. He did not trust his voice.

"Well, father dear," she said slowly. She nodded at the package—a long dress box beside the porch post.

"That was sent to Margaret Fenn. It came here by mistake—addressed to me. There were some express charges on

it. I thought it was for me; I thought Tom had bought it for me yesterday, when he was at the capital, so I opened it. There is a dress pattern in it—yellow and black—colors I never could wear, and Tom has an exquisite eye for those things, and also there is a pair of silk stockings to match. On the memoranda pinned on these, they are billed to Mrs. Fenn, but all charged to Tom. I hadn't opened it when I sent the expressman to Tom's office for the express charges, but when he finds the package has been delivered here—we shall have it squarely before us." The daughter did not turn her eyes to her father as she went on after a little sigh that seemed like a catch in her side:

"So there we are."

The Doctor patted his foot in silence, then replied:

"My poor, poor child—my poor little girl," and added with a heavy sigh: "And poor Tom—Laura—poor, foolish, devil-ridden Tom." She assented with her eyes. At the end of a pause she said with anguish in her voice:

"And when we began it was all so beautiful—so beautiful—so wonderful. Of course I've known for a long time—ever since before Lila came that it was slipping. Oh, father—I've known; I've seen every little giving of the tie that bound us, and in my heart deep down, I've known all—all—everything—all the whole awful truth—even if I have not had the facts as you've had them—you and mother—I suppose."

"You're my fine, brave girl," cried her father, patting her trembling hand. But he could speak no further.

"Oh, no, I'm not brave—I'm not brave," she answered. "I'm a coward. I have sat by and watched it all slip away, watched him getting further and further from me, saw my hold slipping—slipping—slipping, and saw him getting restless. I've seen one awful—" she paused, shuddered, and cried, "Oh, you know, father, that other dreadful affair. I saw that rise, burn itself out and then this one—" she turned away and her body shook.

In a minute she was herself: "I'm foolish I suppose, but I've never talked it out before. I won't do it again. I'm all right now." She took his hands and continued:

"Now, then, tell me—is there any way out? What shall

we do to be saved—Tom and Lila and I?" She hesitated. "I'm afraid— Oh, I know, I know I don't love Tom any more. How could I—how could I? But some way I want to mother him. I don't want to see him get clear down. I know this woman. I know what she means. Let me tell you, father. For two years she's been playing with Tom like a cat. I knew it when she began. I can't say how I knew it; but I felt it—felt it reflected in his moods, saw him nervous and feverish. She's been torturing him, father—she's strong. Also she's—she's hard. Tom hasn't—well, I mean she's always kept the upper hand. I know that in my soul. And he's stark, raving mad somewhere within him." A storm of emotion shook her and then she cried passionately, "And, oh, father, I want to rescue him—not for myself. Oh, I don't love him any more. That's all gone. At least not in the old way, I don't, but he's so sensitive—so easy to hurt. And she's slowly burning him alive. It's awful."

The little pink face of the Doctor began to harden. His big blue eyes began to look through narrow slits in his eyelids, and the pudgy, white-clad figure stood erect. The daughter's voice broke and as she gripped herself the father reached his bristling pompadour and cried in wrath, "Let him burn—let him burn, girl—hell's too good for him!"

His voice was high and harsh and merciless. It restored the woman's poise and she shook her head sorrowfully as she resumed:

"I can't bear to see it; I—I want to shield him—I must—if I can." A tremor ran through her again. She caught hold of herself, then went on more calmly. "But things can't go on this way. Here is this box—"

"Child—child," cried the Doctor angrily, "you come right home—right home," he piped with rising wrath. "Right home to mother and me."

The wife shook her head and replied: "No, father, that's the easy road. I must take the hard road." Her father's mobile face showed his pain and the daughter cried: "I know, father—I know how you would have stopped me before I chose this way. But I did choose and now here is Lila, and here is a home—a home—our home, father, and I mustn't leave it. Here is my duty, here in this home, and I must not

run away. I must work out my life as it is—as before God and Lila—and Tom—yes, Tom, father, as before all three, I have my responsibility. I must not put away Tom—no matter—no matter how I feel—no matter what he has done. I won't," she repeated. "I won't."

The father turned an impatient face to his daughter, and retorted, "You won't—you won't leave that miserable cur—that—that woman hunting dog—won't leave—"

The father's rage sputtered on his lips, but the daughter caught his hand as it was beating his cane on the floor. "Stop, father," she said gently, "it's something more than women that's wrong with Tom. Women are merely an outward and visible sign—it's what he believes—and what he does, living his creed—always following the material thing. As a judge I thought he would see his way—must see his way to bring justice here—" She looked into the fume stained sky above South Harvey, and Foley and Magnus, far down the valley, and tightened her grip on her father's hands. "But no—no," she cried, "Tom doesn't know justice—he only sees the law, the law and profits, and prosperity—only the eternal material. He sits by and sees the company settle for four and five hundred dollars for the lives of the men it wasted in the mine—yes, more than sits by—he stands at the door of justice and drives the widows and children into a settlement like an overseer. And he and Joe Calvin have some sort of real estate partnership— Oh—I know it's dishonest, though I don't know how. But it branches so secretly into the law and it all reaches down into politics. And the whole order here, father—Daniel Sands paying for politics, paying for government that makes the laws, paying for mayors and governors that enforce the laws and paying the judges to back them up—and all that poverty and wretchedness and wickedness down there and all this beauty and luxury and material happiness up here. It's all, all wrong, father." Her voice broke again in sobs, and tears were running down her cheeks as she continued. "How can we blame Tom for violating his vows to me? Where are all our vows to God to deal justly with His people—the widows and orphans and helpless ones, father?" She looked at her father through her tears, at her father, whose face was agape! He was star-

ing into the wistaria vines as one who saw his world quaking. A quick bolt of sympathy shot through the daughter's heart. She patted his limp hands and said softly, "So—father—I mustn't leave Tom. He's a poor, weak creature—a rotten stick—and because I know it—I must stay with him!"

Behind the screen of matter, the lusty fates were pulling at the screws of the rack. "Pull harder," cried the first fate; "the little old pot-bellied rascal—make him see it: make him see how he warned her against the symptoms, but not the disease that was festering her lover's soul!"

"Turn yourself," cried the second, "make the forehead sweat as he sees how he has been delivering laws in a basket to grind iniquity through Tom Van Dorn's mill! Turn—turn, turn you lout!"

"And you," cried the third fate at the screw to the first, "twist that heart-string, twist it hard when he sees his daughter's broken face and hears her sobbing!"

But the angels, the pitying angels, loosened the cords of the rack with their gentle tears.

As the taut threads of the rack slackened, he heard the soft voice of his daughter saying: "But of course, the most important thing is Lila—not that she means a great deal to him now. He doesn't care much for children. He doesn't want them—children."

She turned upon her father and with anguished voice and with all her denied motherhood, she cried: "O, father—I want them—lots of them—arms full of them all the time."

She stretched out her arms. "Oh, it's been so hard, to feel my youth passing, and only one child—I wanted a whole house full. I'm strong; I could bear them. I don't mind anything—I just want my babies—my babies that never have come."

And then the pitiless fates turned the screws of the rack again and the father burst forth in his vain grief, with his high, soft, woman's voice. "I wonder—I wonder—I wonder, what God has in waiting for you to make up for this?"

Before she could answer, the telephone bell rang. The wife stepped to the instrument. "Well," she said when she

came back. "The hour has struck; the expressman went to Tom for the express charges; he knows the package is here and," she added after a sigh, "he knows that I know all about it." She even smiled rather sadly, "So he's coming out—on his wheel."

CHAPTER XXII

IN WHICH TOM VAN DORN BECOMES A WAYFARING MAN ALSO

THE father rose. His head was cast down. He poked a vine curling about the porch floor with his cane.

"I wonder, my dear," he spoke slowly, and with great gentleness, "if maybe I shouldn't talk with Tom—before you see him."

He continued to poke the vine, and looked up at the daughter sadly. "Of course there's Lila; if it is best for her—why that's the thing to do—I presume."

"But father," broke in the daughter, "Tom and I can—"

But he entreated, "Won't you let me talk with Tom? In half an hour—I'll go. You and Lila slip over to mother's for half an hour—come back at half past twelve. I'll tell him where you are."

The mother and child had disappeared around the corner of the house when the click of Van Dorn's bicycle on the curbing told the Doctor that the young man was upon the walk. The package from the capital still lay beside the porch column. The Doctor did not lift his eyes from it as the younger man came hurrying up the steps. He was flushed, bright-eyed, a little out of breath, and his black wing of hair was damp. On the top step, he looked up and saw the Doctor.

"It's all right, Tom—I understand things." The Doctor's eyes turned to the parcel on the floor between them.

The Doctor's voice was soft; his manner was gentle, and he lifted his blue, inquiring eyes into the young Judge's restless black ones. Dr. Nesbit put a fatherly hand on the young man's arm, and said: "Shall we sit down, Tom, and take stock of things and see where we stand? Wouldn't that be a good idea?"

They sat down and the younger man eyed the package, turned it over, looked at the address nervously, pulled at his

mustache as he sank back, while the elder man was saying: "I believe I understand you, Tom—better than any one else in the world understands you. I believe you have not a better friend on earth than I right at this minute."

The Judge turned around and said in a disturbed voice, "I am sure that's the God's truth, Doctor Jim." Then after a sigh he added, "And this is what I've done to you!"

"And will keep right on doing to me as long as you live," piped the elder man, twitching his mouth and nose contemptuously.

"As long as I live, I fancy," repeated the other. In the pause the young man put his hands to his hips and his chin on his breast as he slouched down in the chair and asked: "Where's Laura?"

"Over at her mother's," replied the father. "Nobody will interrupt us—and so I thought we could get down to grass roots and talk this thing out."

The Judge crossed his handsome ankles and sat looking at his trim toes.

"I suppose that idea is as good as any." He put one long, lean, hairy hand on the short, fat knee beside him and said: "The whole trouble with our Protestant religion is that we have no confessor. So some of us talk to our lawyers, and some of us talk to our doctors, and in extreme unction we talk to our newspapers."

He grinned miserably, and went on: "But we all talk to some one, and now I'm going to talk to you—talk for once, Doctor, right out of my soul—if I have one."

He rose nervously, obeying some purely physical impulse, and then sat down again, with his hands in his thick, black hair, and his elbows on his bony knees.

"All right, Tom," piped the Doctor, "go ahead."

"Well, then," he began as he looked at the floor before him, "do you suppose I don't know that you know what I'm up to? Do you think I don't know even what the town is buzzing about? Lord, man, I can feel it like a scorching fire. Why," he exclaimed with emotion, "feeling the hearts of men is my job. I've been at it for fifteen years—"

He broke off and looked up. "How could I get up before a jury and feel them out man by man as I talked if I wasn't

sensitive to these things? You've seen me make them cry when I was in the practice. How could I make them cry if I didn't feel like crying myself. You're a doctor—you know that. People forget what I am—what a thousand stringed instrument I am. Now, Doctor Jim, let me tell you something. This is the bottom hard pan of the truth: I never before really cared for these women—these other women—when I got them. But I do care for the chase, I do care for the risk of it—for the exhilaration of it—for the joy of it!"

The Doctor's mouth twitched and he took a breath as if about to speak. Van Dorn stopped him: "Don't cut in, Doc Jim—let me say it all out. I'm young. I love the moonlight and the stars and I never go through a wood that I do not see trysting places there—and I never see a great stretch of prairie under the sunshine that I do not put in a beautiful woman and go following her—not for her—Doctor Jim, but for the joy of pursuit, for the thrill of uncovering a bared, naked soul, and the overwhelming danger of it. God—man, I've stood afraid to breathe, flattened against a wall and heard the man-beast growl and sniff, hunting me. I love to love and be loved; but not less do I love to hunt and be hunted. I've hidden under trees, I've skulked in the shadows, I've walked boldly in the sunlight with my life in my hand to meet a woman's eyes, to feel her guilty shudder in my arms. Oh, Doctor Jim, you don't understand the riot in my blood that the moon makes shining through the trees upon the water, with great, shadowy glades, and the tinkle of cow bells far away, and a woman afraid of me—and I afraid of her—and nothing but the stars and the night between us."

He rose and began pacing the piazza as he continued speaking. "It's always been so with me—as early as my boyhood it was so. I often wake in the lonely nights and think of them all over again—the days and nights, the girls and women who have flashed bright and radiant into my life. Over and over again, I repeat to my soul their names, over and over I live the hours we have spent together, the dangers, the delights, the cruel misery of it all and then at the turn of the street, at the corner of a room, in the winking of an eye I see another face, it looks a challenge at me and I am out

on the high road of another romance. I've got to go! It's part of my life; it's the pulse of my blood."

He stood excited with his deep, beady, black eyes burning and his proud, vain face flushed and his hands a-tremble. The Doctor saw that he was in the midst of a physical and mental turmoil that could not be checked.

Van Dorn went on: "And then you and my friends ask me to quit. Laura, God help her—she naturally—" he exclaimed. "But is the moon to be blotted out for me? Are the night winds to be muffled and mean no more than the scraping of a dead twig against a rusty wire? Are flowers to lose their scent, and grass and trees and birds to be blurred and turned drab in my eyes? How do you think I live, man? How do you think I can go before juries and audiences and make them thrill and clench their fists and cry like children and breathe with my emotions, if I am to be stone dead? Do you think a wooden man can do that? Try Joe Calvin with a jury—what does he accomplish with all his virtue? He hasn't had an emotion in twenty years. A pretty woman looking at Joe in a crowd wouldn't say anything to him with her eyes and dilating nostrils and the swish of her body. And when he gets before a jury he talks the law to them, and the facts to them, and the justice of the case to them. But when I used to stand up before them, they knew I was weak, human mud. They had heard all the stories on me. They knew me, and some of them despised me, and all of them were watching out for me, but when I reached down in my heart and brought up the common clay of which we all are made and molded it into a man or an event before their eyes, then—by God they came to me. And yet you've been sitting there for years, Doctor Jim Nesbit and saying 'Tom—Tom, why don't you quit?' "

He was seated now, talking in a low, tense voice, looking the Doctor deeply in the eyes, and as he paused, the perspiration stood out upon his scarred forehead, and pink splotches appeared there and the veins of his temples were big and blue. The Doctor turned away his eyes and said coldly: "There's Laura—Tom—Laura and little Lila."

"Yes," he groaned, rising. "There are Laura and Lila."

He thrust his hands deeply into his pockets and looked

down at the Doctor and sneered. "There's the trap that snapped and took a paw, and I'm supposed to lick it and love it and to cherish it."

He shuddered, and continued: "For once I'll speak and tell it all. I'll not be a hypocrite in this hour, though ever after I may lie and cringe. There are Laura and Lila and here am I. And out beyond is the wind in the elms and the sunshine upon the grass and the moving odor of flowers—flowers that are blushing with the joy of nature in her great perennial romance—and there's Laura and Lila and here am I."

His passion was ebbing; his face was hardening into its wonted vain, artificial contour, his eyes were losing their dilation, and he was sitting rather limply in his chair, staring into space. The Doctor came at him.

"You're a fool. You had your fling; you're along in your thirties, nearly forty now and it's time to stop." The younger man could not regain the height, but he could hide under his crust. So he parried back suavely, with insolence in his voice:

"Why stop at thirty—or even forty? Why stop at all?"

"Let me tell you something, Tom," returned the Doctor. "It's all very fine to talk this way; but this thing has become a fixed habit, just like the whiskey habit; and in fifteen or twenty years more you'll be a chronic, physical, degenerate man. You'll lose your self-respect. You'll lose your quick wits, and your whole mind and body will be burning up with a slow fire."

"Oh, you dear old fossil," replied Van Dorn in a hollow, dead voice, rising and patting his tie and adjusting his coat and collar, "I'm no fool. I know what I'm doing. I know how far to go, and when to stop. But this game is interesting; and I'm only a man," he straightened up again, patted his mustache, and again tipped his hat into a cockey angle over his forehead, and went on, "not a monk." He smiled, pivoted on his heel nervously and went on, "And what is more I can take care of myself."

"Tom," cried the Doctor in his treble, with excitement in his voice, "you can't take care of yourself. No man ever

lived who could. You may get away with your love affairs, and no one be the wiser; you may make a crooked or dirty million on a stock deal and no one be the wiser; but you'll bear the marks to the grave."

"So," mocked the sneering voice of the young Judge, "I suppose you'll carry the marks of all the men you've bought up in this town for twenty years."

"Yes, Tom," returned the Doctor pitifully, as he rose and stood beside the preening young man, "I'll carry 'em to the grave with me, too; I've had a few stripes to-day."

"Well, anyway," retorted Van Dorn, pulling his hat over his eyes, restlessly, "you're entitled to what you get in this life. And I'm going to get all I can, money and fun, and everything else. Morals are for sapheads. The preacher's God says I can't have certain things without His cracking down on me. Watch me beat Him at his own game." It was all a make-believe and the Doctor saw that the real man was gone.

"Tom," sighed the Doctor, "here's the practical question —you realize what all this means to Laura? And Lila— why, Tom, can't you see what it's going to mean to her— to all of us as the years go by?"

Their eyes met and turned to the parcel on the floor. "You can't afford—well, that sort of thing," the Doctor punched the parcel contemptuously with his cane. "It's all bad enough, Tom, but that way lies hell!"

Van Dorn turned upon the Doctor, and squared his jaw and said: "Well then—that's the way I'm going—that way"—he nodded toward the package—"lies romance for me! There is the road to the only joy I shall ever know in this earth. There lies life and beauty and all that I live for, and I'm going that way."

The Judge met the father's beseeching face, with an angry glare—defiant and insolent.

The Doctor had no time to reply. There was a stir in the house, and a child's steps came running through the hall. Lila stopped on the porch, hesitating between the two men. The Doctor put out his arms for her. Van Dorn casually reached out his hand. She ran to her father and cried, "Up

—Daddy—up," and jumped to his shoulder as he took her. The Doctor walked down the steps as his daughter came out of the door.

The man and the woman looked at one another, but did not speak. The father put the child down and said:

"Now, Lila, run with grandpa and get a cooky from granny while your mother and I talk."

She looked up at him with her blue eyes and her sadly puckered little face, swallowed her disappointed tears and trudged down the steps after the white-clad grandfather who was untying his horse.

When the child and the grandfather were gone the wife said in a dead, emotionless voice, looking at the parcel on the floor, "Well, Tom?"

"Well, Laura," he repeated, "that's about the size of it—there it is—and you know all about it. I shall not lie—this time. It's not worth while—now."

The woman sat in a porch chair. The man hesitated, and she said: "Sit down, Tom. I don't know what to do or what to say," she began. "If there were just you and me to consider, I suppose I'd say we'd have to quit. But there's Lila. She is here and she does love you—and she has her right—the greatest right in the world to—well, to us—to a home, and a home means a father and a mother." The man rose. He put his hands in his coat pockets and stood by the porch column, making no reply.

The wife continued, "I can't even speak of what you have done to me, Tom. But it will hurt when I'm an old woman—I want to hide my face from every one—even from God—when I think of what you have used me for."

He dropped into the chair beside her, looking at the floor. Her voice had stirred some chord in his thousand-stringed heart. He reached out a hand to her.

"No, Tom," said the wife, "I don't want your pity."

"No, Laura," the husband returned quickly, "no, you don't need my pity; it's not pity that I am trying to give you. I only wished you to listen to what I have to say." The wife looked at her husband for a second in fear as she apprehended what he was about to utter. He turned his eyes from her and went on: "It was a mistake, a very

nightmare of a mistake—my mistake—all my mistake—but still just an awful mistake. We couldn't make life go. All this was foredoomed, Laura, and now—now—" his eyes were upon the parcel on the floor, "here I am sure I have found the thing my life needs. And it is my life—my life." He saw his wife go pale, then flush; but he went on. "After all, it is one's own life that commands him, and nothing else in the world. And now I must follow my destiny."

"But, Tom," asked the wife, "you aren't going to this woman? You aren't going to leave us? You surely won't break up this home—not this home, Tom?"

The man hesitated before answering, then spoke directly: "I must follow my destiny—work it out as I see it. You have no right, no one has any right—even I have no right to compromise with my destiny. I live in this world just once!"

"But what is your destiny, Tom?" answered the wife. "Leave me out of it: but aren't the roots you have put down in this home, this career you are building; our child's normal girlhood with a father's care—aren't these the big things in your destiny? Lila's life—growing up under the shame that follows a child of parents divorced for such base reasons as these? Lila's life is surely a part of your destiny. Surely, surely you have no rights apart from her and hers!"

His quick mind was ready. "I have my own life to live, my own destiny to follow; my individual equation to solve, and for me nothing exists in the universe. As for my career —I'll take care of that. That's mine also!"

The wife threw out an appealing hand. "Tom, I can't help wanting to pick you up and shield you. It will be awful—awful—that thing you are trying to go into. You've always chosen the material thing—the practical thing—and she—she's a practical woman. Oh, Tom—I'm not jealous—not a bit. If I thought she would enrich your soul—if I thought she would give you what I've wanted to give you—what I've prayed God night after night to let me give you—I'd take even Lila and go away and give you your chance for a love such as I've had. Can you see, Tom, I'm not jealous? I'm not even angry."

He turned upon her suddenly and said: "You don't

know what you're talking about. Anyway—she suits me—she'll enrich me as you call it all right. I'm sure of that."

"No, Tom," said the wife quietly, "she'll not enrich you—not spiritually. No one can do that—for any one. It must come from within. I've poured my very heart over you, Tom, and you didn't want it—you only wanted—oh, God—hide my shame—my shame—my shame." Her voice rose for a moment and she muffled it with her face in her arms.

"Tom—" she faltered, "Tom—I am going to make one last plea—for Lila's sake won't you put it all away—won't you?" she shuddered. "It is killing all my self-respect, Tom—but I must. Won't you—won't you please for Lila's sake come back, break this off—and see if we can't patch up life?"

"No," he answered.

Their eyes met; his shifting, beady eyes were held forcibly with many a twitching, by her gray eyes. For two awful seconds they stood taking farewell of each other.

"No," he repeated, dropping his glance.

Then he put out his hand with a gesture of finality, "I'm going now. I don't know when—or—well, whether I'll come—" He picked up the package. He was going down the steps with the package in his hands when he heard the patter of little feet and a little voice calling:

"Daddy—daddy—" and repeated, "daddy."

He did not turn, but walked quickly to the sidewalk. As far as he could hear, that childish voice called to him.

And he heard the cry in his dreams.

CHAPTER XXIII

HERE GRANT ADAMS DISCOVERS HIS INSIDES

LAURA VAN DORN stood watching her husband pass down the street. She silenced the child by clasping her close in the tender motherly arms. No tears rose in the wife's eyes, as she stood looking vacantly down the street at the corner where her husband had turned. Gradually it came to her consciousness that a crowd was gathering by her father's house. She remembered then that she had seen a carriage drive up, and that three or four men followed it on bicycles, and then half a dozen men got out of a wagon. Even while she stared, she saw the little rattletrap of a buggy that Amos Adams drove come tearing up to the curb by her father's house. Amos Adams, Jasper and little Kenyon got out. Even amidst the turmoil of her emotions, she moved mechanically to the street, to see better, then she clasped Lila to her breast and ran toward her father's home.

"What is it?" she cried to the first man she met at the edge of the little group standing near the veranda steps.

"Grant Adams—we're afraid he's killed." The man who spoke was Denny Hogan. Beside him was an Italian, who said, "He's burned something most awful. He got it saving des feller here," nodding and pointing to Hogan.

Laura put down her child and hurried through the house to her father's little office. The strong smell of an anesthetic came to her. She saw Amos Adams standing a-tremble by the office door, holding Kenyon's hand. Amos answered her question.

"They think he's dying,—I knew he'd want to see Kenyon."

Jasper, white and frightened, stood on the stairs. These details she saw at a glance as she pushed open the office door. At first she saw great George Brotherton and three

or four white-faced, terrified working men, standing in stiff helplessness, while like a white shuttle, among the gloomy figures the Doctor moved quickly, ceaselessly, effectively. Then her eyes met her father's. He said:

"Come in, Laura—I need you. Now all of you go out but George and her."

Then, as she came into the group, Laura saw Grant Adams, sitting with agony upon his wet face. Her father bent over him and worked on a puffy, pink, naked arm and shoulder, and body. The man was half conscious; his face was twitching, and when she looked again she saw where his right hand should be only a brown, charred stump.

Not looking up the Doctor spoke: "You know where things are and what I need—I can't get him clear under," Every motion he made counted; he took no false steps; he made no turn of his body or twist of his hand that was not full of conscious purpose. He only spoke to give orders, and when Brotherton whispered to Laura:

"White hot lead pig at the smelter—Grant saw it was going to kill Hogan and grabbed it."

The Doctor shook his head at Brotherton and for two hours that was all Laura knew of the accident. Once when the Doctor stopped for a second to take a deep breath, Brotherton asked, "Do you want another doctor?" the little man shook his head again, and motioned with it at his daughter.

"She's doing well enough." She kept her father's merciless pace, but always the sense of her stricken life seemed to be hovering in the back of her consciousness, and the hours seemed ages as she applied her bandages, and helped with the grewsome work of the knife on the charred stump of the arm. But finally it was over and she saw Brotherton and Hogan lift Grant to a cot, under her father's direction, and carry him to the bedroom she had used as a girl at home. While the Doctor and Laura had been working in his office Mrs. Nesbit had been making the bedroom ready.

It was five o'clock, and the two fagged women were in Mrs. Nesbit's room. The younger woman was pale and haggard and unable to relax. The mother tried all of a mother's wiles to bring peace to the over-strung nerves. But the daughter paced the floor silently, or if she spoke it was to

ask some trivial question about the household—about what arrangements were made for the injured man's food, about Lila, about Amos Adams and Kenyon. Finally, as she turned to leave the room, her mother asked, "Where are you going?" The daughter answered, "Why, I'm going home."

"But Laura," the mother returned, "I believe your father is expecting your help here—to-night. I am sure he will need you." The daughter looked steadily, but rather vacantly at her mother for a moment, then replied: "Well, Lila and I must go now. I'll leave her there with the maid and I'll try to come back."

Her hand was on the door-knob. "Well," hesitated her mother, "what about Tom—?"

The eyes of the two women met. "Did father tell you?" asked the daughter's eyes. The mother's eyes said "Yes." Then rose the Spartan mother, and put a kind, firm hand upon the daughter's arm and asked: "But Laura, my dear, my dear, you are not going back again, to all—all that, are you?"

"I am going home, mother," the daughter replied.

"But your self-respect, child?" quoted the Spartan, and the daughter made answer simply: "I must go home, mother."

When Laura Van Dorn entered her home she began the evening's routine, somewhat from habit, and yet many things she did she grimly forced herself to do. She waited dinner for her husband. She called his office vainly upon the telephone. She and Lila ate alone; often they had eaten alone before. And as the evening grew from twilight to dark, she put the child to bed, left one of the maids in the child's room, lighted an electric reading lamp in her husband's room, turned on the hall lamp, instructed the maid to tell the Judge that his wife was with her father helping him with a wounded man, and then she went out through the open, hospitable door.

But all that night, as she sat beside the restless man, who writhed in his pain even under the drug, she went over and over her problem. She recognized that a kind of finality had come into her relations with her husband. In the rush of events that had followed his departure, a period, definite and

conclusive seemed to have been put after the whole of her life's adventures with Tom Van Dorn. She did not cry, nor feel the want of tears, yet there were moments when she instinctively put her hands before her face as in a shame. She saw the man in perspective for the first time clearly. She had not let herself take a candid inventory of him before. But that night all her subconscious impressions rose and framed themselves into conscious reflections. And then she knew that his relation with her from the beginning had been a reflex of his view of life—of his material idea of the scheme of things.

As the night wore on, she kept her nurse's chart and did the things to be done for her patient. For the time her emotions were spent. Her heart was empty. Even for the shattered and suffering body before her, the tousled red head, the half-closed, pain-bleared eyes, the lips that shielded the clenched teeth—she felt none of that tenderness that comes from deep sympathy and moving pity. At dawn she went home with her body worn and weary, and after the sun was up she slept.

Scarcely had the morning stir begun in the Nesbit household, before Morty Sands appeared, clad in the festive raiment of the moment—white ducks and a shirtwaist and a tennis racquet, to be exact. He asked for the Doctor and when the Doctor came, Morty cocked his sparrow like head and paused a moment after the greetings of the morning were spoken. After his inquiries for Grant had been satisfied, Morty still lingered and cocked his head.

"Of course, Doctor," Morty began diffidently, "and naturally you know more of it than I—but—" he got no further for a second. Then he gathered courage from the Doctor's bland face to continue: "Well, Doctor, last night at Brotherton's, Tom came in and George and Nate Perry and Kyle and Captain Morton and I were there; and Tom—well, Doctor—Tom said something—"

"He did—did he!" cut in the Doctor. "The dirty dog! So he broke the news to the Amen Corner!"

"Now, Doctor, we all know Tom," Morty explained. "We know Tom: but George said Laura was helping with Grant, and I just thought, certainly I have no wish to in-

trade, but I just thought maybe I could relieve her myself by sitting up with Grant, if—"

The Doctor's kindly face twitched with pain, and he cried: "Morty, you're a boy in a thousand! But can't you see that just at this time if I had half a dozen cases like Grant's, they would be a God's mercy for her!"

Morty could not control his voice. So he turned and tripped down the steps and flitted away. As Morty disappeared, George Brotherton came roaring up the hill, but no word of what Van Dorn had said in the Amen Corner did Mr. Brotherton drop. He asked about Grant, inquired about Laura, and released a crashing laugh at some story of stuttering Kyle Perry trying to tell deaf John Kollander about the Venezuelan dispute. "Kyle," said George, "pronounces Venezuela like an atomizer!" Captain Morton rested from his loved employ, let the egg-beater of the hour languish, and permitted stock in his new Company to slump in a weary market while he camped on the Nesbit veranda during the day to greet and disperse such visitors as Mrs. Nesbit deemed of sufficiently small social consequence to receive the Captain's ministrations. At twilight the Captain greeted Laura coming from her home for her night watch, and with a rather elaborate scenario of amenities, told her how his Household Horse company was prospering, how his egg beater was going, and asked after Lila's health, omitting mention of the Judge with an easy nonchalance which struck terror to the woman's heart—terror, lest the Captain and through him all men should know of her trouble.

But deeper than the terror in her heart at what the Captain might know and tell was the pain at the thing she knew herself—that the home which she loved was dead. However proudly it might stand before the world, for the passing hour or day or year, she knew, and the knowledge sickened her to her soul's death, that the home was doomed. She kept thinking of it as a tree, whose roots were cut; a tree whose leaves were still green, whose comeliness still pleased the eye but whose ugly, withered branches soon must stand out to affront the world. And sorrowing for the beauty that was doomed she went to her work. All night with her father she ministered to the tortured man, but in the morning she slipped

away to her home again hoping her numb vain hope, through another weary journey of the sun.

The third night found Grant Adams restless, wakeful, anxious to talk. The opiates had left him. She saw that he was fully himself, even though conscious of his tortured body. "Laura," he cried in a sick man's feeble voice, "I want to tell you something."

"Not now, Grant," she returned quietly. "I'd rather hear it to-morrow."

"No," he returned stubbornly, "I want to tell you now."

He paused as if to catch his breath. "For I want you to know I'm the happiest man in the world." He set his teeth firmly. The muscles of his jaw worked, and he smiled up at her. He questioned her with his blue eyes, and after some assent had come into her face—or he thought it had, he went on:

"There's a God in Israel, Laura—I know it way down in me and all through me."

A crash of pain stopped him. He grinned at the groan, which the pain wrenched from him, and whispered, "There's a God in Israel—for He gave me my chance. I saw the great white killing thing coming to do for Denny Hogan. How I'd waited for that chance. Then when it came, I wanted to run. But I didn't run. There's something in you bigger than fear. So when God gave me my chance He put the—the—the—" pain wrenched him again, and he said weakly, "the—I've got to say it, you'll understand —He put the—the guts in me to take it."

When she left him a few minutes later he seemed to be asleep. But when Doctor Nesbit came into the room an hour later Grant was wide-eyed and smiling, and seemed so much better that as a reward of merit the Doctor brought in the morning paper and told Grant he could look at the headings for five minutes. There it was that he first realized what a lot of business lay ahead of him, learning to live as a one-armed man. The Doctor saw his patient worrying with the paper, and started to help.

"No, Doctor," said the young man, "I must begin sometime, and now's as good a time as any." So he struggled with the unwieldy sheets of paper, and finally managed to

get his morning's reading done. When the time was up, he handed back his paper saying, "I see Tom Van Dorn is going on his vacation—does that mean Laura, too?" The Doctor shook his head; and by way of taking the subject away from Laura he said: "Now about your damages, Grant—you know I'll stand by you with the Company, don't you—I'm no Van Dorn, if I am Company doctor. You ought to have good damages—for—"

"Damages! damages!" cried Grant, "why, Doctor, I can't get damages. I wasn't working for the smelter when it happened. I was around organizing the men. And I don't want damages. This arm," he looked lovingly at the stump beside him, "is worth more in my business than a million dollars. For it proves to me that I am not afraid to go clear through for my faith, and it proves me to the men! Damages! damages?" he said grimly. "Why, Doctor, if Uncle Dan and the other owners up town here only know what this stump will cost them, they would sue me for damages! I tell you those men in the mine there saved my life. Ever since then I've been trying to repay them, and here comes this chance to turn in a little on account, to bind the bargain, and now the men know how seriously I hold the debt. Damages?" There was just a hint of fanaticism in his laugh; the Doctor looked at Grant quickly, then he sniffed, "Fine talk, Grant, fine talk for the next world, but it won't buy shoes for the baby in this," and he turned away impatiently and went into a world of reality, leaving Grant Adams to enjoy his Utopia.

That morning after breakfast, when Laura had gone home, the Doctor and his wife sitting alone went into the matter further. "Of course," said the Doctor, "she'll see that he has gone away. But when should we tell her what he has done?"

"Doctor," said the mother, "you leave his letter here where I can get it. I'm going over there and pack everything that rightfully may be called hers—I mean her dresses and trinkets—and such things as have in them no particular memory of him. They shall come home. Then I'll lock up the house."

The Doctor squinted up his eyes thoughtfully and said

slowly, "Well, that seems kind. I don't suppose you need read her the whole letter. Just tell her he is going to ask for a divorce—tell her it's incompatibility. But his letter isn't important." The Doctor sighed.

"Grant ought really to stay here another week—maybe we can stretch it to ten days—and let her have all the responsibility she'll take. It'll help her over the first bridge. Kenyon is taking care of Lila—I suppose?" The Doctor rose, stood by his wife and said as he found her hand:

"Poor Laura—poor Laura—and Lila! You know when I had her down town with me yesterday, in the hallway leading to Joe Calvin's office, she met Tom—" The Doctor looked away for a moment. "It was pretty tough—her little heart-break when he went by her without taking her up!" The wife did not reply. The husband with his arm about her walked toward the door.

"You can't tell me, my dear, that Tom isn't paying—I know how that sort of thing gets under his skin—he's too sensitive not to imagine all it means to the child." Mrs. Nesbit's face hardened and her husband saw her bitterness. "I know, my dear—I know how you feel—I feel all that, and yet in my very heart I'm sorry for poor Tom. He's swapping substance for shadow so recklessly—not only in this, not merely with Laura—but with everything—everything."

"Good Lord, Jim, I don't see how you can agonize over a wool-dyed scoundrel like that—perhaps you have some tears for that Fenn hussy, too!"

"Well," squeaked the Doctor soberly—"I knew her father—a lecherous old beast who brought her up without restraint or morals—with a greedy philosophy pounded into her by example every day of her life until she was seventeen years old. There's something to be said—even for her, my dear—even for her."

"Well, Jim Nesbit," answered his wife, "I'll go a long way with you in your tomfoolery, but so long as I've got to draw the line somewhere I'll draw it right there."

The Doctor looked at the floor. "I suppose so—" he sighed, then lifted his head and said: "I was just trying to think of all the sorrows that come into the world, of all

the tragedies I ever knew, and I have concluded that this tragedy of divorce when it comes like this—as it has come to our daughter—is the greatest tragedy in the world. To love as she loved and to find every anchor to which she tied the faith of her life rotten, to have her heart seared with faithlessness—to see her child—her flesh and blood scorned, to have her very soul spat upon—that's the essence of sorrow, my dear."

He looked up into her eyes, bent to kiss her hand, and after he had picked up his cane and his hat from the rack, toddled down the walk to the street, a sad, thoughtful, worried little man, white-clad and serene to outward view, who had not even a whistle nor a vagrant tune under his breath to console him.

That day, after her father's insistence, Laura Van Dorn changed from the night watch to the day nurse, and from that day on for ten days, she ministered to Grant Adams' wants. Mechanically she read to him from such books as the house afforded—Tolstoi—Ibsen, Hardy, Howells,—but she was shut away from the meaning of what she read and even from the comments of the man under her care, by the consideration of her own problems. For to Laura Van Dorn it was a time of anxious doubt, of sad retrogression, of inner anguish. In some of the books were passages she had marked and read to her husband; and such pages calling up his dull comprehension of their beauty, or bringing back his scoffing words, or touching to the quick a hurt place in her heart, taxed her nerves heavily. But during the time while she sat by the injured man's bedside, she was glad in her heart of one thing—that she had an excuse for avoiding the people who called.

As Grant grew stronger—as it became evident that he must go soon, the woman's heart shrank from meeting the town, and she clung to each duty of the man's convalescence hungrily. She knew she must face life, that she must have some word for her friends about her tragedy. She felt that in going away, in suing for the divorce himself, her husband had made the break irrevocable. There was no resentment nor malice toward him in her heart. Yet the future seemed hopelessly black and terrible to her.

The afternoon before Grant Adams was to leave the Nesbit home he was allowed to come down stairs, and he sat with her upon the side porch, all screened and protected by vines that led to her father's office. Laura's finger was in a book they had been reading—it was "The Pillars of Society." The day was one of those exquisite days in mid-June, and after a cooling rain the air was clear and seemed to put joy into one's veins.

"How modern he is—how American—how like Harvey," said the young man. "Ibsen might have lived right here in this town, and written that," he added. He started to raise his right arm, but a twinge of pain reminded him that the stump was bound, so he raised his left and cried:

"And I tell you, Laura—that's what I'm on earth to fight—the whole infernal system of pocket-picking and poor-robbing, and public gouging that we permit under the profit system." The woman's thoughts were upon her own sorrow, but she called herself back to smile and reply:

"All right, Grant—I'm with you. We may have to draft father and commandeer George Brotherton, and start out as a pirate crew—but I'm with you."

"Let me tell you something," said the man. "I've not been loafing for the past two years. I've got Harvey—the men in the mines and smelter, I mean, fairly well unionized, but the unions are nothing—nothing ultimate—they are only temporary."

"Well," returned the woman, soberly, "that's something."

The man made no answer. With his free hand he was ruffling his red hair, and she could see the muscles of his jaw working, and she felt his great mouth harden as he flashed his blue eyes upon her. "Laura," he cried, "they may whip us this year. For a while they may scare the men into voting for prosperity, but as sure as we both live we shall see these times and these issues and these men who are promoting this devilish conspiracy eternally damned—all of them—the issues, the times and the men who are leading. And I don't want to hurt you, Laura, but," he added solemnly, "your husband must take his punishment with the rest."

They sat mute, then each heard the plaintive cry of a child running through the house. "She is looking for me," said Laura. In a moment a little wet-eyed girl was in her mother's arms, crying:

"I want my daddy—my dear daddy—I want him to come home—where is he?"

She sobbed in her mother's arms and held up her little face to look earnestly into the beautiful face above her, as she cried, "Is he gone—Annie Sands' new mamma says my papa's never coming back—Oh, I want my daddy—I want to go home."

She continued calling him and sobbing, and the mother rose to take the child away.

"Laura!" cried Grant, in a passionate question. He saw the weeping child and the grief-stricken face of the mother. In an instant he held out his bony left hand to her and said gently: "God help you—God help you."

CHAPTER XXIV

IN WHICH THE DEVIL FORMALLY TAKES THE TWO HINDERMOST AND CLOSES AN ACCOUNT IN HIS LEDGER

HARVEY tried sincerely to believe in Tom Van Dorn up to the very day when it happened. For the town had accepted him gladly and unanimously as its most distinguished citizen. But when the town read in the *Times* one November day after he had come home from his political campaign through the east for sound money and the open mills—a campaign in which Harvey had seen him through the tinted glasses of the Harvey *Daily Times* as one of the men who had saved the country—when the town read that cold paragraph beginning: "A decree of divorce was issued to-day to Judge Thomas Van Dorn, from his wife, Mrs. Laura Nesbit Van Dorn, upon the ground of incompatibility of temperament by Judge protem Calvin in the district court," and ending with these words: "Mrs. Van Dorn declined through her attorney to participate in a division of the property upon any terms and will live for the present with her daughter, aged five, at the home of Dr. and Mrs. James Nesbit on Elm Street"—when the town read that paragraph, Harvey closed its heart upon Thomas Van Dorn.

Only one other item was needed to steel the heart of Harvey against its idol, and that item they found upon another page. It read, "Wanted, pupils for the piano—Mrs. Laura Van Dorn, Quality Hill, Elm Street."

Those items told the whole story of the deed that Thomas Van Dorn had done. If he had felt bees sting before he got his decree, he should have felt vipers gnawing at his vitals afterward.

But he was free—the burden of matrimony was lifted. He felt that the whole world of women was his now for the choosing, and of all that world, he turned in wanton fancy

to the beckoning arms of Margaret Fenn. But the feeling of freedom, the knowledge that he could speak to any woman as he chose and no one could gainsay him legally, the consciousness that he had no ties which the law recognized—and with him law was the synonym of morality—the exuberant sense of relief from a bondage that was oppressive to him, overbore all the influence of the town's spirit of wrath in the air about him.

As for the morality of the town and what he regarded as its prudery—he scorned it. He believed he could live it down; he said in his heart that it was merely a matter of a few weeks, a few months, or a few years at most, before they would have some fresh ox to gore and forget all about him. He was sure that he could play upon the individual self-interest of the leaders of the community to make them respect him and ignore what he had done. But what he had done, did not bother him much. It was done.

He seemed to be free, yet was he free?

Now Thomas Van Dorn was thirty-eight years old that autumn. Whether he loved the woman he had abandoned or not, she was a part of his life. Counting the courtship during which he and this woman had been associated closely, nearly ten years of his life, half of the years of his manhood—and that half the most active and effective part, had been spent with her. A million threads of memory in his brain led to her; when he remembered any important event in his life during those ten years, always the chain of associated thought led back to the image of her. There she was, fixed in his life; there she smiled at him through every hour of those ten years of their life, married or as lovers together.

For whom God had joined, not Joseph Calvin, not Joseph Calvin, sitting as Judge protem, not Joseph Calvin vested with all the authority of the great commonwealth in which he lived, could put asunder. That was curious. At times Thomas Van Dorn was conscious of this phenomenon, that he was free, yet bound, and that while there was no God, and the law was the final word, in all considerable things, some way the brain, or the mind that is fettered to the brain, or the soul that is built upon the aspect of the mind fettered to the brain, held him tethered to the past.

For our lives are not material, whatever our bodies may be. Our lives are the accumulations of consciousness, the assembling of our memories, our affections, our judgments, our aspirations, our weaknesses, our strength—the vast sum of all our impressions, good or bad, made upon a material plate called the brain. The brain is of the dust. The picture—which is a human life—is of the spirit. And the spirit is of God. And when by whatever laws of chance or greed, or high purpose or low desire two lives are joined until the cement of years has united the myriads of daily sensations that make up a segment of these lives, they are thus joined in the spirit forever.

Now Thomas Van Dorn went about his free life day by day, glorying in his liberty. But strands of his old life, floating idly and unnoticed through minutes of his hourly existence, kept tripping him and bothering him. His meals, his clothes, his fixed habits of work, the manifold creature comforts that he prized—all the associations of his life with home—came to him a thousand, thousand times and cut little knife-edged rents in the fabric of his new freedom.

And he would have said a year before that it was physically impossible for one child—one small, fair-haired child of five, with pleading face and eager eyes—to meet a man so often in a given period of time, as Lila met him. At first he had avoided her; he would duck into stores; hurry up stairways, or hide himself in groups of men on the sidewalk when he saw her coming. Then there came a time when he knew that the little figure was slipping across the street to avoid him because his presence shamed her with her playmates.

He had never in his heart believed that the child meant much to him. She was merely part of the chain that held him, and yet now that she was not of him or his interests, it seemed to Thomas Van Dorn that she made a piteous figure upon the street, and that the sadness that flitted over her face when she saw him, in some way reproached him, and yet—what right had she in him—or why should he let her annoy him, or disturb his peace and the happiness that his freedom brought. Materially he noticed that she was well fed, well dressed, and he knew that she was well housed. What more could she have—but that was absurd. He

couldn't wreck his life for the mere chance that a child should be petted a little. There was no sense in such a proposition. And Thomas Van Dorn's life was regulated by sense—common sense—horse sense, he called it.

It is curious—and scores of Tom Van Dorn's friends wondered at it then and have marveled at it since, that in the six months which elapsed between his divorce and his remarriage, he did not fathom the shallowness and pretense of Margaret Fenn. But he did not fathom them. Her glib talk taken mechanically from cheap philosophy about being what you think you are, about shifting moral responsibility onto good intentions, about living for the present and ignoring the past with the uncertain future, took him in completely. She used to read books to him, sitting in the glow of her red lamp-shade—a glow that brought out hidden hints of her splendid feline body, books which soothed his vanity and dulled his mind. In that day he fancied her his intellectual equal. He thought her immensely strong-minded, and clear headed. He contrasted her in thought with the wife he had put away, told Margaret that Laura was always puling about duty and getting her conscience pinched and whining about it. They agreed sitting there under the lamp, that they had been mates in some far-off jungle, that they had been parted and had been seeking one another through eons, and that when their souls met one of the equations of the physical universe was solved, and that their happiness was the adjustment of ages of wrong. She thought him the most brilliant of men; he deemed her the most wonderful of women, and the devil checked off two drunken fools in his inventory.

It was in those halcyon days of his courtship of Margaret Fenn, when he felt the pride of conquest of another soul and body strongly upon him, that Judge Thomas Van Dorn began to acquire—or perhaps to exhibit noticeably—the turkey gobbler gait, that ever afterwards went with him, and became famous as the Van Dorn Strut. It was more than mere knee action—though knee action did characterize it prominently. The strut properly speaking began at the tip of his hat—his soft, black hat that sat so cockily upon his head. His head was thrown back as though he had been pulled by a

check-rein. His shoulders swung jauntily—more than jauntily, call it insolently—as he walked, and his trunk swayed with some stateliness as his proud hands and legs performed their grand functions. But withal he bowed and smiled—with much condescension—and lifted his hat high from his handsome head, and when women passed he doffed it like a flag in a formal salute, and while his body spelled complacence, his face never lost the charm and grace and courtesy that drew men to him, and held them in spite of his faults.

One bitter cold December day, when the wind was blowing sleet down Market Street, and hardly a passer-by darkened the doors of the stores, the handsome Judge sailed easily into the Amen Corner, fumbled over the magazines, picked out a pocketful of cigars from the case, without calling Mr. Brotherton who was in the rear of the store working upon his accounts, lighted a cigar, and stood looking out of the frosted window at the deserted gray windy street, utterly ignoring the presence of Captain Morton who was pretending to be deeply buried in the *National Tribune,* but who was watching the Judge and trying to summon courage to speak. The Judge unbuttoned his modish gray coat that nearly reached his heels and put his hands behind him for a moment, as he puffed and pondered—apparently debating something.

"Judge," said the Captain suddenly and then the Captain's courage fell and he added, "Bad morning."

"Yes," acquiesced the Judge from his abstraction. In a long pause that followed, Captain Morton swallowed at least a peck of Adam's apples that kept coming up to choke him, and then he cleared his throat and spoke:

"Tom—Tom Van Dorn—look around here." He lowered his voice and went on, "I want to talk to you." The Captain edged over on the bench.

"Sit down here a minute—I've been wanting to see you for a month." Captain Morton spoke all but in a whisper. The Adam's apple kept strangling him. The Judge saw that the old man was wrestling with some heavy problem. He turned, and looking down at the little wizened man, asked: "Well, Captain?"

The Captain moistened his lips, patted his toes on the

floor, and twirled his fingers. He took a deep breath and said: "Tom, I've known you since you were twenty-one years old. Do you remember how we took you in the first night you came to town—me and mother? before the hotel was done, eh?" A smile on the Judge's face emboldened the Captain. "You've got brains, Tom—lots of brains—I often say Tom Van Dorn will sit in the big chair at the White House yet—what say? Well, Tom—" Now there was the place to say it. But the Captain's Adam's apple bobbed convulsively in a second silence. He decided to take a fresh start: "Tom, you're a sensible man—? I says to myself I'm going to have a plain talk to that man. He's smart; he'll appreciate it. Just the other day—George back there, and John Kollander and Dick Bowman and old man Adams, and Joe Calvin, and Kyle Perry were in here talking and I says—Gentlemen, that boy's got brains—lots of brains—eh? and he's a prince; 'y gory a prince, that's what Tom Van Dorn is, and I can go to him—I can talk to him—what say?" The Captain was on the brink again. Slowly there mantled over the face of the prince the gray scum of a fear. And the scar on his forehead flashed crimson. The Captain saw that he had been anticipated. He began patting his toes on the floor. Judge Van Dorn's face was set in a cement of resistance.

"Well?" barked the Judge. The little man's lips dried, he smiled weakly, and licked his lips and said: "It was about my sprocket—my Household Horse—I says, Tom Van Dorn understands it if you gentlemen don't and some day him and me will talk it over and 'y gory—he'll buy some stock—he'll back me."

The Captain's nervous voice had lifted and he was talking so that the clerk and Mr. Brotherton both in the back part of the store might hear. The cement of the Judge's countenance cracked in a smile, but the gray mantle of fear still fluttered across his eyes.

"All right, Captain," he answered, "some other time—not now—I'm in a hurry," and went strutting out into the storm.

Mr. Brotherton with his moon face shining into the ledger laughed a great clacking laugh and got up from his stool to

come to the cigar case, saying, "Well, say—Cap—if you'd a' went on with what you started out to say, I'd a' give fi' dollars—say, I'd a' made it ten dollars—say!" And he laughed again a laugh that seemed to set all the celluloid in the plush covered, satin lined toilet cases on the new counter a-flutter. He walked down the store with elephantine tread, as he laughed, and then the door opened and Dr. Nesbit came in. Five months had put a perceptible bow into his shoulders, and an occasional cast of uncertainty into his twinkling eyes.

Mr. Brotherton called half down the store, "Say, Doc—you should have been here a minute ago, and seen the Captain bristle up to Tom Van Dorn about his love affair and then get cold feet and try to sell him some Household Horse stock." The Captain grinned sheepishly, the Doctor patted the Captain affectionately on the shoulder and chirped.

"So you went after him, did you, Ezry?" The loose skin of his face twitched, "Poor Tom—packing up his career in a petticoat and going forth to fuss with God—no sense—no sense," piped the Doctor, glancing over the headlines in his *Star*. The Captain, still clinging to the subject that had been too much for him, remarked: "Doc—don't you think some one ought to tell him?" The Doctor put down his paper, stroked his pompadour and looking over his glasses, answered:

"Ezry—if some one hasn't told him—no one ever can. I tried to tell him once myself. I talked pretty middlin' plain, Ezry." He was speaking softly, then he piped out, "But what a man's heart doesn't tell him, his friends can't. Still, Ezry, a strong friend is often a good tonic for a weak heart." The Doctor looked at the Captain, then concluded: "That was a brave, kind act you tried to do—and I warrant you got it to him—some way. He's a keen one—Ezry—a mighty keen one; and he understood."

Mr. Brotherton went back to his ledger; the Doctor plunged into the *Star*, the Captain folded up his newspaper and began studying the trinkets in the holiday stock in the show case under the new books. A comb and brush with tortoise shell backs seemed to arrest his eyes. "Doc," he mused, "Christmas never comes that I don't think of—her

—mother! I guess I'd just about be getting that comb and brush for her." The Doctor casually looked through the show case and saw what had attracted the Captain. "Doc," again the Captain spoke, bending over the case with his face turned from his auditor: "You're a doctor and are supposed to know lots. Tell me this: How does a man break it to a woman when he wants to leave her—eh?" Without waiting for an answer the Captain went on: "And this is what puzzles me—how does he get used to another one—with that one still living? You tell me that. I'd think he'd be scared all the time that he would do something the way his first wife had trained him not to. Of course," meditated the Captain, "right at first, I suppose a man may feel a little coltish and all. But, Doc, honest and true, when mother first left I kind of thought—well, I used to enjoy swearing a little before we was married, and I says to myself I guess I may as well have a damn or two as I go along—but, Doc, I can't do it. Eh? Every time I set off the fireworks—she fizzles; I can see mother looking at me that way." The old man went on earnestly: "Tell me, Doc, you're a smart man—how Tom Van Dorn can do it. What say? 'Y gory I'd be scared—right now! And if I thought I had to get used all over again to another woman, and her ways of doing things—say of setting her bread Friday night, and having a hot brick for her feet and putting her hair in her teeth when she done it up, and dosing the children with sassafras tea in spring—I'd just naturally take to the woods, eh? And as for learning over again all the peculiarities of a new set of kin and what they all like to eat and died of, and how they all treated their first wives, and who they married—Doc? Doc?" The Captain shook a dubious and doleful head. "Fourteen years, Doc," sighed the Captain. "Pretty happy years—children coming on,—trouble visiting us with the rest; sorrow—happiness—skimping and saving; her a-raking and scraping to make a good appearance, and make things do; me trying one thing and another, to make our fortune and her always kind and encouraging, and hopeful; death standing between us and both of us sitting there by the kitchen stove trying to make up some kind of prayer to comfort the other. Four-

teen years of it, Doc—her and me, and her so patient, so forbearing—Doc—you're a smart man—tell me, Doc, how did Tom Van Dorn get around to actually doing it? What say?"

The Doctor waved his folded paper in an impatient gesture at the Captain.

"We are all products of our yesterdays, Ezry; we are what we were, and we will be what we were. Man is queer. Sometimes out of the depth of him a god rises—sometimes it's a beast. I've sat by the bed and seen life gasp into being; I've stood in the ranks and fought with men as you have, and have seen them fight and then again have seen them turn tail like cowards. I have sat by the bed and seen life sigh into the dust. What is life—what is the God that quickens and directs us,—why and how and whence?—Ezry Morton, man—I don't know. And as for Tom—into that roaring hell of lust and lying and cheap parching pride where he is plunging—why, Ezry, I could almost cry for the fool; the damned beforehand fool!"

As the Doctor went whistling homeward through the storm that winter night he wondered how many more months the black spell of grief and despair would cover his daughter. Five months had passed since that summer day when her home had fallen. He knew how tragic her struggle was to fit herself into her new environment. She was dwelling, but not living in the Nesbit home. It was the Nesbit home; a kindly abode, but not her home. Her home was gone. The severed roots of her life kept stirring in her memory—in her heart, and outwardly, her spirit showed a withered and unhappy being, trying to rebuild life, to readjust itself after the shock that all but kills. The Doctor realized what an agony the new growth was bringing, and that night, stirred somewhat to somber meditation by Captain Morton's reflections, the Doctor's tune was a doleful little tune as he whistled into the wind. Excepting Kenyon Adams, who still came daily bringing his violin and was rapidly learning all that she knew of the theory of music, Laura Van Dorn had no interest in life outside of her family. When the Adamses came to dinner as frequently they came—Laura

seemed to feel no constraint with them. Grant had even made her laugh with stories of Dick Bowman's struggles to be a red card socialist, and to vote the straight socialist ticket and still keep in ward politics in which he had been a local heeler for nearly twenty years. Laura was interested in the organization of the unions, and though the Doctor carped at it and made fun of Grant, it was largely to stir up a discussion in which his daughter would take a vital interest.

Grant was getting something more than a local reputation in labor circles as an agitator, and was in demand as an organizer in different parts of the valley. He worked at his trade more or less, having rigged up a steel device on the stump of his right forearm that would hold a saw, a plane or a hammer. But he was no longer a boss carpenter at the mines. His devotion to the men and in the work they were doing seemed to the Nesbits to awaken in their daughter a new interest in life, and so they made many obvious excuses to have the Adamses about the Nesbit home.

Kenyon was growing into a pale, dreamy child with wonderful eyes, lustrous, deep, thoughtful and kind. He was music mad, and read all the poetry in the Nesbit library—and the Doctor loved poetry as many men love wine. Herotales and mythology, romances and legends Kenyon read day after day between his hours of practice, and for diversion the boy sat before the fire or in the sun of a chilly afternoon, retailing them in such language as little Lila could understand. So in the black night of sorrow that enveloped her, Laura Nesbit often spent an hour with Grant Adams, and talked of much that was near her heart.

He was strong, sometimes she thought him coarse and raw. He talked the jargon of the agitator with the enthusiasm of a dervish and the vernacular of the mine and the shop and the forge. But in him she could see the fire of a mad consuming passion for humanity.

During those days of shame and misery, when the old interests of life were dying in her heart, interests upon which she had builded since her childhood—the interests of home, of children, of wifehood and motherhood, to which in joy she

had consecrated herself, she listened often to Grant Adams. Until there came into her life slowly and feebly, and almost without her conscious realization of it, a new vision, a new hope, a new path toward usefulness that makes for the only happiness.

As the Doctor went whistling into the storm that December night, he went over in his mind rather seriously the meaning and the direction and the final outcome of those small, unconscious buddings of interest in social problems that he saw putting forth in his daughter's mind. Above everything else, he was not a reformer. He hated the reformer type. But he preferred to see her interested in the work of Grant Adams—even though he considered Grant mildly cracked and felt that his growing power in the valley was dangerous—rather than to see her under the black pall that enveloped her.

It was early in the evening as the Doctor went up the hill. He passed Judge Van Dorn, striding along and saw him turn into Congress Street to visit his lady love. The Judge carried a large roll of architect's plans under his arm. The Doctor nodded to the Judge, and the Judge rather proud that he was free and did not have to slink to his lady's bower, returned a gracious good evening, and his tall, straight figure went prancing down the street. When the Doctor entered his home, he found Laura and Lila sitting by the open fire. The child was in her night gown and they were discussing Santa Claus. Lila was saying:

"Kenyon told me Santa Claus was your father?"

Before the mother could reply the little voice went on:

"I wonder if my Santa Claus will come this year—will he, mother?—Why doesn't father ever come to us, mother—why doesn't he play with me when I see him?"

Now there is the story of the absent one that parents tell—the legend about God and Heaven and the angels—a beautiful and comforting legend it is for small minds, and being merciful, God may in His own way bring us to realize it, in deed and in truth. When the lonely father or the broken hearted mother tells the desolate child that legend, childhood finds surcease there for its sorrow. But when there is no God, no Heaven, no angels to whom the absent one has

gone, what then do deserted mothers say?—or dishonored fathers answer? What surcease for its sorrow has the little lonely, aching heart in that sad case? What then, "ye merry gentlemen that nothing may dismay"?

CHAPTER XXV

IN WHICH WE SEE TWO TEMPLES AND THE CONTENTS THEREOF

IT was an old complaint in Harvey that the Harvey *Tribune* was too much of a bulletin of the doings of the Adams family and their friends. But when a man sets all the type on a paper, writes all the editorials and gets all the news he may be pardoned if he takes first such news as is near his hand. Thus in the May that followed events set down in the last chapter we find in the *Tribune* a few items of interest to the readers of this narrative. We learn for instance that Captain Ezra Morton who is introducing the Nonesuch Sewing Machine, paid his friends in Prospect school district a visit; that Jasper Adams has been promoted to superintendent of deliveries in Wright & Perry's store; that Kenyon Adams entertained his friends in the Fifth Grade of the South Harvey schools with a violin solo on the last day of school; that Grant Adams had been made assistant to the secretary of the National Building Trades Association in South Harvey; that Mr. George Brotherton with Miss Emma Morton and Martha and Ruth had enjoyed a pleasant visit with the Adamses Sunday afternoon and had resumed an enjoyable buggy ride after partaking of a chicken dinner. In the editorial column were some reflections evidently in Mr. Left's most lucid style and a closing paragraph containing this: "Happiness and character," said the Peach Blow Philosopher, "are inseparable: but how easy it is to be happy in a great, beautiful house; or to be unhappy if it comes to that in a great, beautiful house: Environment may influence character; but all the good are not poor, nor all the rich bad. Therefore, the Peach Blow Philosopher takes to the woods. He is willing to leave something to the Lord Almighty and the continental congress. Selah!"

As Dr. Nesbit sat reading the items above set forth upon

the broad new veranda of the residence that he was so proud to call his home, he smiled. It was late afternoon. He had done a hard day's work—some of it among the sick, some of it among the needy—the needy in the Doctor's bright lexicon being those who tried to persuade him that they needed political offices. "I cheer up the sick, encourage the needy, pray for 'em both, and sometimes for their own good have to lie to 'em all," he used to say in that day when the duties of his profession and the care of his station as a ruling boss in politics were oppressing him. Dr. Nesbit played politics as a game. But he played always to win.

"Old Linen Pants is a bland old scoundrel," declared Public Opinion, about the corridors of the political hotel at the capital. "But he is as ruthless as iron, as smooth as oil, and as bitter as poison when he sets his head on a proposition. Buy?—he buys men in all the ways the devil teaches them to sell—offices, power, honor, cash in hand, promises, prestige—anything that a man wants, Old Linen Pants will trade for, and then get that man. Humorous old devil, too," quoth Public Opinion. "Laughs, quotes scripture, throws in a little Greek philosophy, and knows all the new stories, but never forgets whose play it is, nor what cards are out." Thus was he known to others.

But as he remained longer and longer in the game, as his fourth term as state Senator began to lengthen, the game here and there began to lose in his mouth something of its earlier savor. That afternoon as he sat on the veranda overlooking the lawn shaded by the elm trees of his greatest pride, Dr. Nesbit was discoursing to Mrs. Nesbit, who was sewing and paid little heed to his animadversions; it was a soliloquy rather than a conversation—a soliloquy accompanied by an obligato of general mental disagreement from the wife of his bosom, who expressed herself in sniffs and snorts and scornful staccato interjections as the soliloquy ran on. Here are a few bars of it transcribed for beginners:

From the Doctor's solo: "Heigh-ho—ho hum—Two United States Senators, one slightly damaged Governor, marked down, five congressmen and three liars, one supreme court justice, also a liar, a working interest in a second,

and a slight equity in a third; organization of the Senate, speaker of the house,—forty liars and thirty thieves—that's my political assets, my dear."

"I wish you'd quit politics, Doctor, and attend to your practice," this by way of accompaniment from Mrs. Nesbit. The Doctor was in a playful and facetious mood that pleasant afternoon.

He leaned back in his chair, reached up in the air with outstretched arms, clapped his hands three times, gayly, kicked his shoe-heels three times at the end of his short little legs, smiled and proceeded: "Liabilities of James Nesbit, dealer in public grief, licensed dispenser of private joy, purveyor of Something Equally Good, item one, forty-nine gentlemen who think they've been promised thirty-six jobs—but they are mistaken, they have been told only that I'll do what I can for them—which is true; item two, three hundred friends who want something and may ask at any minute; item three, seventy-five men who will be or have been primed up by the loathed opposition to demand jobs; item four, Tom Van Dorn who is as sure as guns to think in about a year he has to have a vindication by running for another term; item five—"

"He can't have it," from Mrs. Nesbit, and then the piping voice went on:

"Item six, a big, husky fight in Greeley county for the maharaja of Harvey and the adjoining provinces." A deep sigh rose from the Doctor, then followed more clapping of hands and kicking of heels and some slapping of suspenders, as the voices of Kenyon and Lila came into the veranda from the lawn, and the Doctor cast up his accounts: "Let's see now—naught's a naught and figure's a figure and carry six, and subtract the profits and multiply the trouble and you have a busted community. Correct," he piped, "Bedelia, my dear, observe a busted community. Your affectionate lord and master, kind husband, indulgent father, good citizen gone but not forgotten. How are the mighty fallen."

"Doctor," snapped Mrs. Nesbit, "don't be a fool; tell me, James, will Tom Van Dorn want to run again?"

Making a basket with his hands for the back of his head the Doctor answered slowly, "Ho-ho-ho! Oh, I don't know

—I should say—yes. He'll just about have to run—for a vindication."

"Well, you'll not support him! I say you'll not support him," Mrs. Nesbit decided, and the Doctor echoed blandly:

"Then I'll not support him. Where's Laura?" he asked gently.

"She went down to South Harvey to see about that kindergarten she's been talking of. She seems almost cheerful about the way Kenyon is getting on with his music. She says the child reads as well as she now and plays everything on the violin that she can play on the piano. "Doctor," added Mrs. Nesbit meditatively, "now about those oriental rugs we were going to put upstairs—don't you suppose we could take the money we were going to put there and help Laura with that kindergarten? Perhaps she'd take a real interest in life through those children down there." The wife hesitated and asked, "Would you do it?"

The Doctor drummed his chair arm thoughtfully, then put his thumbs in his suspenders. "Greater love than this hath no woman shown, my dear—that she gives up oriental rugs for a kindergarten—by all means give it to her."

"James, Lila still grieves for her father."

"Yes," answered the Doctor sadly, "and Henry Fenn was in the office this morning begging me to give him something that would kill his thirst."

The doctor brought his hands down emphatically on his chair arms. "Duty, Bedelia, is the realest obligation in the world. Here are Lila and Henry Fenn. What a miserable lot of tommy rot about soul-mating Tom and this Fenn woman conjured up to get away from their duty to child and husband. They have swapped a place with the angels for a right to wallow with the hogs; that's what all their fine talking amounts to." The Doctor's shrill voice rose. "They don't fool me. They don't fool any one; they don't even fool each other. I tell you, my dear," he chirped as he rose from his chair, "I never saw one of those illicit love affairs in life or heard of it in literature that was not just plain, old fashion, downright, beastly selfishness. Duty is a greater thing in life than what the romance peddlers call love."

The Doctor stood looking at his wife questioningly—waiting for some approving response. She kept on sewing. "Oh you Satterthwaites with hearts of marble," he cried as he patted the cast iron waves of her hair and went chuckling into the house.

Mrs. Nesbit was aroused from her reverie by the rattle of the Adams buggy. When it drew up to the curb Laura and Grant climbed out and came up the walk. Laura wore a simple summer dress that brought out all the exquisite coloring of her skin, and made her light hair shine in a kind of haloed glory. It had been months since the mother had seen in her daughter's face such a smile as the daughter gave to the man beside her—red-faced, angular, hard muscled, in his dingy blue carpenter's working clothes with his measuring rule and pencil sticking from his apron pocket, and with his crippled arm tipped by its steel tool-holder.

"Grant is going to take that box of Lila's toys down to the kindergarten, mother," she explained.

When they had disappeared up the stairs Mrs. Nesbit could hear them on the floor above and soon the heavy feet of the man carrying a burden were on the stairs and in another minute the young woman was saying:

"Leave them by the teacher's desk, Grant," and as he untied the horse, she called, "Now you will get that door in to-night without fail—won't you? I'll be down and we'll put in the south partition in the morning." As she turned from the door she greeted her mother with a smile and dropped wearily into a chair.

"Oh mother," she cried, "it's going to be so fine. Grant has the room nearly finished and he's interesting the wives of the union men in South Harvey and George Brotherton is going to give us every month all the magazines and periodicals that are not returnable and George brought down a lot of Christmas numbers of illustrated papers, and we're cutting the bright pictures out and pinning them on the wall and George himself worked with us all afternoon. George says he is going to make every one of his lodges contribute monthly to the kindergarten—he belongs to everything but the Ladies of the G. A. R.—" she smiled and

her mother smiled with her,—"and Grant says the unions are going to pay half of the salary of the extra teacher. That makes it easier."

"Well, Laura, don't you think—"

But her daughter interrupted her. "Now, mother," she went on, "don't you stop me till I'm done—for this is the best yet. Morty Sands came down to-day to help—" Laura laughed a little at her mother's surprised glance, "and Morty promised to give us $200 for the kindergarten just as soon as he can worm it out of his father for expense money." She drew in a deep, tired breath, "There," she sighed, "that's all."

Her own child came up and the mother caught the little girl and began playing with her, tying her hair ribbon, smoothing out her skirts, rubbing a dirt speck from her nose, and cuddling the little one rapturously in her arms. When the two women were alone, Laura sat on the veranda steps with her head resting upon her mother's knee. The mother touched the soft hair and said: "Laura, you are very tired."

"Yes, mother," the daughter answered. "The mothers are so hungry for help down there in South Harvey, and," she added a little drearily—"so am I; so we are speaking a common language."

She nestled her head in the lap above her. "And I'm going to find something worth doing—something fine and good."

She watched the lazy clouds, "You know I'm glad about Morty Sands. Grant thinks Morty sincerely wants to amount to something real—to help and be more than a money grubber! If the old spider would just let him out of the web!" The mother stared at her daughter a second.

"Well, Laura, about the only money grubbing Morty seems to be doing is grubbing money out of his father to maintain his race horse."

The daughter smiled and the mother went on with her work. "Mother, did you know that little Ruth Morton is going to begin taking vocal lessons this summer?" The mother shook her head. "Grant says Mr. Brotherton's paying for it. He thinks she has a wonderful voice."

"Voice—" cut in Mrs. Nesbit, "why Laura, the child's only fourteen—voice—!"

Laura answered, "Yes, mother, but you've never heard her sing; she has a beautiful, deep, contralto voice, but the treble above 'C' is a trifle squeaky, and Mr. Brotherton says he's 'going to have it oiled'; so she's to 'take vocal' regularly."

On matters musical Mrs. Nesbit believed she had a right to know the whole truth, so she asked: "Where does Mr. Brotherton come in, Laura?"

"Oh, mother, he's always been a kind of god-father to those girls. You know as well as I that Emma's been playing with that funeral choir of yours and Mr. Brotherton's all these years, only because he got her into it, and Grant says he's kept Mrs. Herdicker from discharging Martha for two years, just by sheer nerve. Of course Grant gets it from Mr. Brotherton but Grant says Martha's so pretty she's such a trial to Mrs. Herdicker! I like Martha, but, mother, she just thinks she should be carried round on a chip because of her brown eyes and red hair and dear little snubby nose. Grant says Mr. Brotherton is trying to get the money someway to float the Captain's stock company and put his Household Horse on the market. I think Mr. Brotherton is a fine man, mother—he's always doing things to help people."

Mrs. Nesbit folded up her work, and began to rise. "George Brotherton, Laura," said her mother as she stood at full length looking down upon her child, "has a voice of an angel, and perhaps the heart of a god, but he will eat onions and during the twenty years I've been singing with him I've never known him to speak a correct sentence. Common, Laura—common as dishwater."

As Laura Van Dorn talked the currents of life eddying about her were reflected in what she said. But she could not know the spirit that was moving the currents; for with a neighborly shyness those who were gathering about her were careful to seem casual in their kindness, and she could not know how deeply they were moved to help her. Kindergartens were hardly in George Brotherton's line; yet he untied old bundles of papers, ransacked his shop and brought a

great heap of old posters and picture papers to her. Captain Morton brought a beloved picture of his army Colonel to adorn the room, and deaf John Kollander, who had a low opinion of the ignorant foreigners and the riff-raff and scum of society, which Laura was trying to help, wished none the less to help her, and came down one day with a flag for the schoolroom and insisted upon making a speech to the tots about patriotism. He made nothing clear to them but he made it quite clear to himself that they were getting the flag as a charity, which they little deserved, and never would return. And to Laura he conveyed the impression that he considered her mission a madness, but for her and the sorrow which she was fighting, he had appreciative tenderness. He must have impressed his emotions upon his wife for she came down and talked elaborately about starting a cooking school in the building, and after planning it all out, went away and forgot it. The respectable iron gray side-whiskers of Ahab Wright once relieved the dingy school room, when Ahab looked in and the next day Kyle Perry on behalf of the firm of Wright & Perry came trudging into the kindergarten with a huge box which he said contained a p-p-p-p-p-pat-a-p-p-p-pppat-pat—" here he swallowed and started all over and finally said p-p-patent," and then started out on a long struggle with the word swing, but he never finished it, and until Laura opened the box she thought Mr. Perry had brought her a soda fountain. But Nathan Perry, his son, who came wandering down to the place one afternoon with Anne Sands, put up the swing, and suggested a half dozen practical devices for the teacher to save time and labor in her work, while Anne Sands in her teens looked on as one who observes a major god completing a bungling job of the angels on a newly contrived world.

Sometimes coming home from his day's work Amos Adams would drop in for a chat with the tired teacher, and he refreshed her curiously with his quiet manner and his unsure otherworldliness, and his tough, unyielding optimism. He had no lectures for the children. He would watch them at their games, try to play with them himself in a pathetic, old-fashioned way, telling them fairy stories of an elder and a grimmer day than ours. Sometimes Doctor Nesbit,

coming for Laura in his buggy, would find Amos in the school room, and they would fall to their everlasting debate upon the reality of time and space with the Doctor enjoying hugely his impious attempt to couch the terminology of abstract philosophy in his Indiana vernacular.

Lida Bowman bringing her little brood sometimes would sit silently watching the children, and look at Laura as if about to speak, but she always went away with her mind unrelieved. Violet Hogan, who brought her beruffled and bedizened eldest, made up for Mrs. Bowman's reticence. Moreover Violet brought other mothers and there was much talk on the topics of the day—talk that revealed to Laura Nesbit a whole philosophy that was new to her—the helpfulness of the poor to the poor.

But if others brought to Laura Van Dorn material strength and spiritual comfort in her enterprise, Grant Adams waved the wand of his steel claw over the kindergarten and made it live. For he was a power in the Wahoo Valley. Her friends knew that his word gave the kindergarten the endorsement of every union there and thus brought to it mothers with children and with problems as well as children, whom Laura Van Dorn otherwise never could have reached. The unions made a small donation monthly to the work which gave them the feeling of proprietorship in the place and the mothers and children came in self-respect. But if Grant gave life to the kindergarten, he got more than he gave. For the restraining hand of Laura Van Dorn always was upon him, and his friends in the Valley came to realize her friendship for them and their cause. They knew that many a venture of Grant's Utopia would have been a wild goose chase but for the wisdom of her counsel. And the two came to rely upon each other unconsciously.

So in the ugly little building near Dooley's saloon in South Harvey the two towns met and worked together; and all to heal a broken heart, a bruised life. From out of the unexplored realm where our dreams are blooming into the fruit of reality one evening came Mr. Left with this message: "Whoever in the joy of service gives part of himself to the vast sum of sacrificial giving that has remained unspent,

since man began to walk erect, is adding to humanity's heritage, is building an unseen temple wherein mankind is sheltered from its own inhumanity. This sum of sacrificial giving is the temple not made with hands!"

Now the foundations of that part of the temple not made with hands in South Harvey, may be said to have been laid and the watertable set on the day when Laura Van Dorn first laughed the bell-chime laugh of her girlhood. And that day came well along in the summer. It was twilight and the Doctor was sitting with his wife and daughter on their east veranda when Morty Sands came flitting across the lawn like a striped miller moth in a broad-banded outing suit. He waved gayly to the little company in the veranda and came up the steps at two bounds, though he was a man of thirty-eight and just the least bit weazened.

"Well," he said, with his greetings scarcely off his lips, "I came to tell you I've sold the colt!"

The chorus repeated his announcement as a question.

"Yes, sold the colt," solemnly responded Morty. And then added, "Father just wouldn't! I tried to get that two hundred in various ways—adding it to my cigar bill; slipping it in on my bill for raiment at Wright & Perry's, but father pinned Kyle down, and he stuttered out the truth. I tried to get the horse-doctor to charge the two hundred into his bill and when father uncovered that—I couldn't wait any longer so I've sold the colt!"

"Well, Morty, what for in Heaven's name?" asked Laura. Morty began fumbling in his pockets before he spoke. He did not smile, but as his hand came out of an inside pocket, he said gently: "For two hundred and seventeen dollars and a half! I fought an hour for that half dollar!" He handed it to the Doctor, saying: "It's for the kindergarten. You keep it for her, Doctor Jim!"

When Morty had gone Mrs. Nesbit said: "What queer blood that Sands blood is, Doctor. There is Mary Sands's heart in that boy, and Daniel has bred nothing into him. They must have been a queer breed a generation or two back!"

The Doctor did not answer. He took the money which Morty had given to him, handed it to Laura and said: "And

now my dear, accept this token of devotion from Sir Mortimer Sands, of the golden heart and wooden head!" And then Laura laughed, not in derision, not in merriment even, but in sheer joy that life could mean so much. And as she laughed the temple not made with hands began to rise strong and beautiful in her heart and in the hearts of all who touched her.

How they would have sneered at Laura Van Dorn's niche in the temple, those practical folk who helped her because they loved her. How George Brotherton would have laughed; with what suspicion John Kollander would have viewed the kindergarten, if he had been told that it was part of a temple. For he had no sort of an idea of letting the rag-tag and bob-tail of South Harvey into a temple; he knew very well they deserved no temple. They were shiftless and wicked. How Wright & Perry would have sniffed at any one who would have called the dreary little shack, where Laura Van Dorn held forth, a temple. For they all pretended to see only the earthly dimensions of material things. But in their hearts they knew the truth. It is the American way to mask the beauty of our nobler selves, or real selves under a gibing deprecation. So we wear the veneer of materialism, and beneath it we are intense idealists. And woe to him who reckons to the contrary!

Perhaps the town's views on temples in general and Laura's temple in particular, was summed up by Hildy Herdicker, Prop., when she read Mr. Left's reflections in the *Tribune*. "Temples—eh?—temples not made with hands—is it? Well, Miss Laura can get what comfort she can out of her baby shop; but me? Every man to his trade as Kyle Perry said when he tried to buy a dozen scissors and got a sewing machine—me?—I get my heart balm selling hats, and if others gets theirs coddling brats—'tis the good God's wisdom that makes us different and no business of mine so long as they bring grist to the profit mill! The trouble with their temples is that they don't pay taxes!"

So in the matter of putting up temples—particularly in the matter of erecting temples not made with hands, the town worked blindly. But so far as Laura Van Dorn was concerned, while she was working on her part of the temple,

she had the vision of youth still in her heart. Youth indeed is that part of every soul that life has not tarnished, and if we keep our faith, hold ourselves true and bow to no circumstance however arrogant it may be, youth still will abide in our hearts through many years. Now Laura, who was born Nesbit and became Van Dorn, was taking up life with that large charity that comes to every unconquered soul. She held her illusions, she believed in herself, and youth shone like a beacon from her face and glowed in her body.

For Thomas Van Dorn, who had been her husband, she had trained herself to hold no unkind thought. She even taught Lila—when the child asked for him—to harbor no rancor toward him. So the child turned to her father when they met, the natural face of a child; it was a sad little face that he saw—though no one else ever saw it sad; but the child smiled when she spoke and looked gently at him, in the hope that some day he would come back to her.

Now it happened that on the night when Laura's laugh first echoed through her temple another rising temple witnessed a ceremony entirely befitting its use.

That night—late that night when a pale moon was climbing over the valley below the town, Margaret and her lover stood alone in the great unfinished house which they were building.

Through the uncurtained windows the moonlight was streaming, making white splashes upon the floors. Across the plank pathways they wandered locating the halls, the great living-room, the spacious dining-room, the airy, comfortable bedrooms exposed to the south, the library, the kitchen, and the ballroom on the third floor. It was to be a grand house—this house of Van Dorn. And in their fancy the man and the woman called it the temple of love erected as an altar to the love god whom they worshiped. They peopled it with many a merry company. They saw the rich and the great in the dining-room. They pictured in this vision pleasure capering through the ball room. They enshrined wisdom and contentment in the library. In the great living-room they installed elegance and luxury, and hospitality beckoned with ostentatious pride for the coming of such of the nobility as Harvey and its environs and the

surrounding state and Nation could produce. A grand, proud temple, a rich, beautiful temple, a strong, masterful temple would be this temple of love.

"And, dearest," said he—the master of the house, as he held her in his arms at the foot of the stairway that swept down into the broad hall like the ghost of some baronial grandeur, "dearest, what do we care what they say! We have built it for ourselves—just for you, I want it—just for you; not friends, not children, not any one but you. This is to be our temple of love."

She kissed him, and whined wordless assent. Then she whispered: "Just you—you, you, and if man, woman or child come to mar our joy or to lessen our love, God pity the intruder." And like a flaming torch she fluttered in his arms.

The summer breeze came caressingly through an unclosed window into the temple. It seemed—the summer breeze which fell upon their cheeks—like the benediction of some pagan god; their god of love perhaps. For the grand house, the rich house, the beautiful, masterful temple of their mad love was made for summer breezes.

But when the rain came, and the storms fell and beat upon that house, they found that it was a house built upon sand. But while it stood and even when it fell there was a temple, a real temple, a temple made with hands—a temple that all Harvey and all the world could understand!

CHAPTER XXVI

DR. NESBIT STARTS ON A LONG UPWARD BUT DEVIOUS JOURNEY

THE Van Dorns opened their new house without ostentation the day after their marriage in October. There was no reception; the handsomest hack in town waited for them at the railway station, as they alighted from the Limited from Chicago. They rode down Market Street, up the Avenue to Elm Crest Place, drove to the new house, and that night it was lighted. That was all the ceremony of housewarming which the place had. The Van Dorns knew what the town thought of them. They made it plain what they thought of the town. They allowed no second rate people to crowd into the house as guests while the first rate people smiled, and the third rate people sniffed. The Judge had some difficulty keeping Mrs. Van Dorn to their purpose. She was impatient—having nothing in particular to think about, and being proud of her furniture. Naturally, there were calls—a few. And they were returned with some punctiliousness. But the people whom the Van Dorns were anxious to see did not call. In the winter, the Van Dorns went to Florida for a fortnight, and put up at a hotel where they could meet a number of persons of distinction whom they courted, and whom the Van Dorns pressed to visit them. When she came home from the winter's social excursion, Mrs. Van Dorn went straight to the establishment of Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., and bought a hat; and bragged to Mrs. Herdicker of having met certain New York social dignitaries in Florida whose names were as familiar to the Harvey women as the names of their hired girl's beaux! Then having started this tale of her social prowess on its career, Margaret was more easily restrained by her husband from offering the house to the Plymouth Daughters for an entertainment. It was in that spring that Margaret began—or

perhaps they both began to put on what George Brotherton called the "Van Dorn remnant sale." The parade passed down Market Street every morning at eight thirty. It consisted of one handsome rather overdressed man and one beautiful rather conspicuously dressed woman. On fair days they rode in a rakish-looking vehicle known as a trap, and in bad weather they walked through Market Street. At the foot of the stairs leading to the Judge's office they parted with all the voltage of affection permitted by the canons of propriety and at five in the evening, Mrs. Van Dorn reappeared on Market Street, and at the foot of the stairs before the Judge's office, the parade resumed its course.

"Well—say," said George Brotherton, "right smart little line of staple and fancy love that firm is carrying this season. Rather nice titles too; good deal of full calf bindings—well, say—glancing at the illustrations, I should like to read the text. But man—say—hear your Uncle George! With me it's always a sign of low stock when I put it all in the window and the show case! Well, say—" and he laughed like the ripping of an earthquake. "It certainly looks to me as if they were moving the line for a quick turnover at a small profit! Well say!"

But without the complicated ceremony required to show the town that he was pleased with his matrimonial bargain, the handsome Judge was a busy man. Every time he saw Dr. Nesbit toddling up or down Market Street, or through South Harvey, or in the remotenesses of Foley or Magnus, the Judge whipped up his energies. For he knew that the Doctor never lost a fight through overconfidence. So the Judge, alone for the first time in his career, set out to bring about his nomination, where a nomination meant an election. Now a judge who showed the courage of his convictions, as Judge Van Dorn had shown his courage in forcing settlements in the mine accident cases and in similar matters of occasional interest, was rather more immediately needed by the mine owners of Harvey than the political boss, who merely used the mine owner's money to encompass his own ends, and incidentally work out the owner's salvation. Daniel Sands played both sides, which was all that Van Dorn could ask. But when the Doctor saw that Sands

was giving secret aid to Van Dorn, the Doctor's heart was hot within him. And Van Dorn continued to rove the district day and night, like a dog, hunting for its buried bone.

It was in the courthouse that Van Dorn made his strongest alliance—in the courthouse, where the Doctor was supposed to be in supreme command. A capricious fate had arranged it so that nearly all the county officers were running for their second terms, and a second term was a time honored courtesy. Van Dorn tied himself up with them by maintaining that his was a second term election also,—and a second regular four year term it was. His appointment, and his election to fill out the remainder of his predecessor's term, he waved aside as immaterial, and staged himself as a candidate for his second term. The Doctor tried to break the combination between the Judge and the second term county candidates by ruthlessly bringing out their deputies against the second termers as candidates. But the scheme provoked popular rebellion. The Doctor tried bringing out one young lawyer after another against the Judge, but all had retainers from the mine owners, and no one in the county would run against Van Dorn, so the Doctor had to pick his candidate from outside of the county, in a judicial convention wherein Greeley County had a majority of the votes. But Van Dorn knew that for all the strategy of the situation, the Doctor might be able to mass the town's disapproval of Van Dorn, socially, into a political majority in the convention against him. So the handsome Judge, with his matrimonial parade to give daily, his political fortunes to consider every hour, and withal, a court to hold, and a judicial serenity to maintain, was a busy young man—a rather more than passing busy young man!

As for the Doctor, he threw himself into the contest against Van Dorn with no mixed motives. "There," quoth the Doctor, to the wide world including his own henchmen, yeomen, heralds, and outriders, "is one hound pup I am going to teach house manners!" And failing to break Van Dorn's alliance in the courthouse, and failing to bulldoze Daniel Sands out of a secret liaison with Van Dorn, failing to punish those of his courthouse friends who permitted Van Dorn to stand with them on their convention tickets in the

primary, the Doctor went forth with his own primary ticket, and announced that he proposed to beat Van Dorn in the convention single handed and alone.

And so quiet are the wheels of our government, that few heard them grinding during the spring and early summer —few except the little coterie of citizens who pay attention to the details of party politics. Yet underneath and over the town, and through the very heart of it wherever the web of the spider went, there was a cruel rending. Two men with hate in their hearts were pulling at the web, wrenching its filaments, twisting it out of shape, ripping its texture, in a desperate struggle to control the web, and with that control to govern the people.

Then Dr. Nesbit pushed his way into the very nest of the spider, and bolted into Daniel Sands's office to register a final protest against Sands's covert alliance with the Judge. He plunked angrily into the den of the spider, shut the door, turned the spring lock, and looking around saw not Sands, but Van Dorn himself.

The Doctor burst out: "Well, young man! So you're here, eh!" Van Dorn nodded pleasantly, and replied graciously: "Yes, Doctor, here I am, and I believe we have met here before—at one time or another."

The Doctor sat down and slapping a fat hand on a chair arm, cried angrily: "Thomas, it can't be did—you can't cut 'er."

Judge Van Dorn answered blandly, rather patronizingly: "Yes, Dr. Jim, it can be done. And I shall do it."

"Have you let 'em fool you—the fellows on the street?" asked the Doctor.

Judge Van Dorn tapped on the desk beside him meditatively, then answered slowly: "No—I should say they mostly lied to me—they're not for me—excepting, maybe, Captain Morton, who tried to say he was opposed to me—but couldn't—quite. No—Doctor—no—Market Street didn't fool me."

He was so suave about it, so naïve, and yet so cock-sure of his success, that the Doctor was impatient: "Tom," he piped, "I tell you, they're too strong to bluff and too many to buy. You can't make it."

The younger man shut one eye, knocked with his tongue on the roof of his mouth, and then said as he looked insolently into the Doctor's face:

"Well, to begin—what's your price?"

The Doctor flushed; his loose skin twitched around his nostrils, and he gripped his chair arms. He did not answer for nearly a minute, during which the Judge tilted back in his chair beside the desk and looked at the elder man with some show of curiosity, if not of interest.

"My price," sneered the Doctor, "is a little mite low today. It's a pelt—a hound pup's pelt and you are going to furnish it, if you'll stop strutting long enough for me to skin you!"

The two men glared at each other. Then Van Dorn, regaining his poise, answered: "Well, sir, I'm going to win—no matter how—I'm going to win. I've sat up with this situation every night for six months—Oh, for a year. I know it backwards and forwards, and you can't trip me any place along the line. I've counted you out." He went on smiling:

"What have I done that is not absolutely legal? This is a government of law, Doctor—not of hysteria. The trouble with you," the Judge settled down to an upright position in his chair, "is that you're an old maid. You're so—so" he drawled the "so" insolently, "damn nice. You're an old maid, and you come from a family of old maids. I warrant your grandmother and her mother before her were old maids. There hasn't been a man in your family for five generations." The Doctor rose. Van Dorn went on arrogantly, "Doctor James Nesbit, I'm not afraid of you. And I'll tell you this: If you make a fight on me in this contest, when I'm elected, we'll see if there isn't one less corrupt boss in this state and if Greeley County can't contribute a pompadour to the rogues' gallery and a tenor voice to the penitentiary choir."

During the harangue of the Judge, the Doctor's full lips had begun to twitch in a smile, and his eyes to twinkle. Then he chirped gaily:

"Heap o' steam for the size of the load and weight of your biler, Tom. Better hoop 'em up!"

And with a laugh, shaking his little round stomach, he toddled out of the room into the corridor, and began whistling the tune that tells what will happen when Johnny comes marching home.

So the Doctor whistled about his afternoon's work and did not realize that the whistling was a form of nervousness.

That evening the Doctor and Laura began to read their Browning where they had left off the night before. They were in the midst of "Paracelsus," when the father looked up and said:

"Laura, you know I'm going to fight Tom Van Dorn for another term as district judge?"

"Why, of course you should, father—I didn't expect he'd ask it again!" said the daughter.

"We had a row this afternoon—a miserable, bickering row. He got on his hind legs and snarled and snapped at me, and made me mad, I guess. So I got to thinking why I should be against him, and it came to me that a man who had violated the decencies as he has and whose decisions for the old spider have been so raw, shouldn't be judge in this district. Lord, what will young fellows think if we stand for him! So I have kind of worked myself up," the Doctor smiled deprecatingly, "to a place where I seem to have a sacred duty in the matter of licking him for the sake of general decency. Anyway," he concluded in his high falsetto, "old Browning's diver, here, fits me. He goes down a pauper and, with his pearl, comes up a prince."

"Festus," cried the Doctor, waving the book, "I plunge."

Thus through the pique of pride, and through the sting of scorn, a force of righteousness came into the world of Harvey. For our miracles of human progress are not always done with prunes and prisms. The truth does not come to men always, nor even, generally, as they are gazing in joyful admiration at the good and the beautiful. Sudden conversions of men to good causes are rare, and often unstable and sometimes worthless. The good Lord would find much of the best work of the world undone if he waited until men guided by purely altruistic motives and inspired by new impulses to righteousness, did it. The world's work is done by ladies and gentle-

men who, for the most part, are largely clay, working in the clay, for clay rewards, with just enough of the divine impulse moving them to keep their faces turned forward and not back.

Public opinion in the Amen Corner, voiced by Mr. Brotherton, spoke for Harvey and said: "Well, say—what do you think of Old Linen Pants bucking the whole courthouse just to get the hide of Judge Van Dorn? Did you ever see such a thing in your whole life?" emphasizing the word "whole" with fine effect.

Mr. Brotherton sat at his desk in the rear of his store, contemplating the splendor of his possessions. Gradually the rear of the shop had been creeping toward the alley. It was filled with books, stationery, cigars and smoker's supplies. The cigars and smoker's supplies were crowded to a little alcove near the Amen Corner, and the books—school books, pirated editions of the standard authors, fancy editions of the classics, new books copyrighted and gorgeously bound in the fashion of the hour, were displayed prominently. Great posters adorned the vacant spaces on the walls, and posters and enlarged magazine covers adorned the bulletin boards in front of the store. Piles of magazines towered on the front counters—and upon the whole, Mr. Brotherton's place presented a fairly correct imitation of the literary tendencies of the period in America just before the Spanish war.

Amos Adams came in, with his old body bent, his hands behind him, his shapeless coat hanging loosely from his stooped shoulders, his little tri-colored button of the Loyal Legion in his coat lapel, being the only speck of color in his graying figure. He peered at Mr. Brotherton over his spectacles and said: "George—I'd like to look at Emerson's addresses—the Phi Beta Kappa Address particularly." He nosed up to the shelves and went peering along the books in sets. "Help yourself, Dad, help yourself— Glad you like Emerson—elegant piece of goods; wrapped one up last week and took it home myself—elegant piece of goods."

"Yes," mused the reader, "here is what I want—I had a talk with Emerson last night. He's against the war; not that he is for Spain, of course, but Huxley," added Amos, as

he turned the pages of his book, "rather thinks we should fight—believes war lies along the path of greatest resistance, and will lead to our greater destiny sooner." The old man sighed, and continued: "Poor Lincoln—I couldn't get him last night: they say he and Garrison were having a great row about the situation."

The elder stroked his ragged beard meditatively. Finally he said: "George—did you ever hear our Kenyon play?"

The big man nodded and went on with his work. "Well, sir," the elder reflected: "Now, it's queer about Kenyon. He's getting to be a wonder. I don't know—it all puzzles me." He rose, put back the book on its shelf. "Sometimes I believe I'm a fool—and sometimes things like this bother me. They say they are training Kenyon—on the other side! Of course he just has what music Laura and Mrs. Nesbit could give him; yet the other day, he got hold of a piano score of Schubert's Symphony in B flat and while he can't play it, he just sits and cries over it—it means so much to the little fellow."

The gray head wagged and the clear, old, blue eyes looked out through the steel-rimmed glasses and he sighed: "He is going ahead, making up the most wonderful music—it seems to me, and writing it down when he can't play it—writing the whole score for it—and they tell me—" he explained deprecatingly, "my friends on the other side, that the child will make a name for himself." He paused and asked: "George—you're a hardheaded man—what do you think of it? You don't think I'm crazy, do you, George?"

The younger man glanced up, caught the clear, kindly eye of Amos Adams looking questioningly down.

"Dad," said Mr. Brotherton, hammering his fat fist on the desk, "'there's more things in Heaven and earth than are dreamed of in your philosophy, Horatio'—well say, man—that's Shakespeare. We sell more Shakespeares than all the other poets combined. Fine business, this Shakespeare. And when a man holds the lead in the trade as this Shakespeare has done ever since I went into the Red Line poets back in the eighties—I'm pretty nearly going to stay by him. And when he says, 'Don't be too damn sure you know it all—' or words to that effect—and holds the trade saying

it—well, say, man—your spook friends are all right with me, only say," Mr. Brotherton shuddered, "I'd die if one came gliding up to me and asked for a chew of my eating tobacco —the way they do with you!"

"Well," smiled Amos Adams, "much obliged to you, George—I just wanted your ideas. Laura Van Dorn has sent Kenyon's last piece back to Boston to see if by any chance he couldn't unconsciously have taken it from something or some one. She says it's wonderful—but, of course," the old man scratched his chin, "Laura and Bedelia Nesbit are just as likely to be fooled in music as I am with my controls." Then the subject drifted into politics—the local politics of the town, the Van Dorn-Nesbit contest.

And at the end of their discussion Amos rubbed his bony, lean, hard, old hands, and looked away through the books and the brick wall and the whole row of buildings before him into the future and smiled. "I wonder—I wonder if the country ever will come to see the economic and social and political meaning of this politics that we have now—this politics that the poor man gets through a beer keg the night before election, and that the rich man buys with his 'barl.'"

He shook his head. "You'll see it—you and Grant—but it will be long after my time." Amos lifted up his old face and cried: "I know there is another day coming—a better day. For this one is unworthy of us. We are better than this—at heart! We have in us the blood of the fathers, and their high visions too. And they did not put their lives into this nation for this—for this cruel tangle of injustice that we show the world to-day. Some day—some day," Amos Adams lifted up his face and cried: "I don't know! May be my guides are wrong but my own heart tells me that some day we shall cease feeding with the swine and return to the house of our father! For we are of royal blood, George—of royal blood!"

"Why, hello, Morty," cut in Mr. Brotherton. "Come right in and listen to the seer—genuine Hebrew prophet here —got a familiar spirit, and says Babylon is falling."

"Well, Uncle Amos," said Morty Sands, "let her fall!" Old Amos smiled and after Morty had turned the talk from falling Babylon to Laura Van Dorn's kindergarten, Amos

being reminded by Laura of Kenyon and his music, unfolded his theory of the occult source of the child's musical talent, and invited George and Morty to church to hear Kenyon play.

So when Sunday came, with it came full knowledge that most members of the congregation were to hear Kenyon Adams' new composition, which had been rather widely advertised by his friends; and Rev. John Dexter, feeling himself a fifth wheel, discarded his sermon and in humility and contrition submitted some extemporaneous remarks on the passion for humanity of "Christ and him crucified."

A little boy was Kenyon Adams—a slim, great-eyed, serious faced, little boy in an Eton jacket and knickerbockers—not so much larger than his violin that he carried under his arm. His little hand shook, but Grant caught his gaze and with a tender, earnest reassurance put sinews into the small arms, and stilled an unsteady jaw. The organ was playing the prelude, when the little hand with the bow went out in a wide, sure, strong curve, and when the bow touched the strings, they sang from a soul depth that no child's experience could know.

It was the first public rendering of the now famous Adagio in C minor, known sometimes as "The Prairie Wind," or perhaps better as the Intermezzo between the second and third acts of the opera that made Kenyon Adams' fame in Europe before he was twenty. It has been changed but little since that first hearing there in John Dexter's church with the Sands Memorial organ, built in the early eighties for Elizabeth Page Sands, mother of Anne of that tribe. The composition is simplicity itself—save for the mystical questioning that runs through it in the sustained sevenths—a theme which Captain Morton said always reminded him of a meadow lark's evening song, but which repeats itself over and over plaintively and sadly as the stately music swells to its crescendo and dies with that unanswered cry of heartbreak echoing in the last faint notes of the closing bar.

When it was finished, those who had ears heard and understood and those who had not said, "Well," and waited for public opinion, unless they were fools, in which case they said they would have preferred something to whistle. But

because the thing impressed itself upon hundreds of hearts that hour, many in the congregation came forward to greet the child.

Among these, was a tall, stately young woman in pure white with a rose upon her hat so deeply red that it seemed guilty of a shame. But her lips were as red as the red of the rose and her eyes glistened and her face was wrought upon by a great storm in her heart. Behind her walked a proud gentleman, a lordly gentleman who elbowed his way through the throng as one who touches the unclean. The pale child stood by Grant Adams as they came. Kenyon did not see the beautiful woman; the child's eyes were upon the man. He knew the man; Lila had poured out her soul to the boy about the man and in his child's heart he feared and abhorred the man for he knew not what. The man and woman kept coming closer. They were abreast as they stepped into the pulpit where the child stood. By his own music, his soul had been stirred and riven and he was nervous and excited. As the woman beside the man stretched out her arms, with her face tense from some inner turmoil, the child saw only the proud man beside her and shrank back with a wild cry and hid in his father's breast. The eyes of Grant and Margaret met, but the child only cuddled into the broad breast before him and wept, crying, "No—no—no—"

Then the proud man turned back, spurned but not knowing it, and the beautiful woman with red shame in her soul followed him with downcast face. In the church porch she lifted up her face as she said with her fair, false mouth: "Tom, isn't it funny how those kind of people sometimes have talent—just like the lower animals seem to have intelligence. Dear me, but that child's music has upset me!"

The man's heart was full of pride and hate and the woman's heart was full of pride and jealousy. Still the air was sweet for them, the birds sang for them, and the sun shone tenderly upon them. They even laughed, as they went their high Jovian way, at the vanities of the world on its lower plane. But their very laughter was the crackling of thorns under a pot wherein their hearts were burning.

CHAPTER XXVII

IN WHICH WE SEE SOMETHING COME INTO THIS STORY OUTSIDE OF THE MATERIAL WORLD

"LIFE," writes Mr. Left, using the pseudonym of the Peachblow philosopher, "disheartens us because we expect the wrong things of it. We expect material rewards for spiritual virtues, material punishments for spiritual transgressions; when even in the material world, material rewards and punishments do not always follow the acts which seem to require them. Yet the only sure thing in the world is that our spiritual lapses bring spiritual punishments, and our spiritual virtues have their spiritual rewards."

Now these observations of Mr. Left might well be taken for the thesis of this story. Tom Van Dorn's spiritual transgressions had no material punishments and the good that was in Grant Adams had no material reward. Yet the spiritual laws which they obeyed or violated were inexorable in their rewards and punishments.

Once there entered the life of Judge Van Dorn, from the outside, the play of purely spiritual forces, which looped him up and tripped him in another man's game, and Tom, poor fellow, may have thought that it was a special Providence around with a warrant looking after him. Now this statement hangs on one "if,"—if you can call Nate Perry a man! "One generation passeth and another cometh on," saith the Preacher. Perhaps it has occurred to the reader that the love affairs of this book are becoming exceedingly middle aged; some have only the dying glow of early reminiscence. But here comes one that is as young as spring flowers; that is—if Nate Perry is a man, and is entitled to a love affair at all. Let's take a look at him: long legged, lean faced, keen eyed, razor bodied, just back from College where he has

studied mining engineering. He is a pick and shovel miner in the Wahoo Fuel Company's mine, getting the practical end of the business. For he is heir apparent of stuttering Kyle Perry, who has holdings in the mines. Young Nate's voice rasps like the whine of a saw and he has no illusions about the stuff the world is made of. For him life is atoms flopping about in the ether in an entirely consistent and satisfactory manner. Things spiritual don't bother him. And yet it was in working out a spiritual equation in Nate Perry's life that Providence tipped over Tom Van Dorn, in his race for Judgeship.

And now let us put Mr. Brotherton on the stand:

"Showers," exclaims Mr. Brotherton, "showers for Nate and Anne,—why, only yesterday I sent him and Grant Adams over to Mrs. Herdicker's to borrow her pile-driver, and spanked him for canning a dog, and it hasn't been more'n a week since I gave Anne a rattle when her father brought her down town the day after the funeral, as he was looking over Wright & Perry's clerks for the fourth Mrs. Sands—and here's showers! Well, say, isn't time that blue streak! Showers! Say, I saw Tom Van Dorn's little Lila in the store this morning—isn't she the beauty—bluest eyes, and the sweetest, saddest, dearest little face—and say, man—I do believe Tom's kind of figuring up what he missed along that line. He tried to talk to her this morning, but she looked at him with those blue eyes and shrank away. Doc Jim bought her a doll and a train of cars. That was just this morning, and well, say—I wouldn't be surprised if when I come down and unlock the store to-morrow morning, some one will be telling me she's having showers. Isn't time that old hot-foot?"

"Showers—kitchen showers and linen showers, and silver showers for little Anne—little Anne with the wide, serious eyes, 'the home of silent prayer';—well, say, do you know who said that? It was Tennyson. Nice, tasty piece of goods—that man Tennyson. I've handled him in padded leather covers; fancy gilt cloth, plain boards, deckle-edges, wide margins, hand-made paper, and in thirty-nine cent paper—and he is a neat, nifty piece of goods in all of them—always easy to move and no come backs." After this pean to the poet,

Mr. Brotherton turned again to his meditations. "Little Anne—Why, it's just last week or such a matter I wrapped up Mother Goose for her—just the other day she came in when they sent her off to school, and I gave her a diary—and now it's showers—" He shook his great head, "Well, say—I'm getting on."

And while Mr. Brotherton mused the fire burned—the fire of youth that glowed in the heart of Nathan Perry. When he wandered back from college no one in particular had noticed him. But Anne Sands was no one in particular. And as no one in particular was looking after Anne and her affairs, as a girl in her teens she had focused her heart upon the gangling youth, and there grew into life one of those matter-of-fact, unromantic love affairs that encompass the whole heart. For they are as commonplace as light and air and are equally vital. Because their course is smooth, such affairs seem shallow. But let unhappy circumstance break the even surface, and behold, from their depths comes all the beauty of a great force diverted, all the anguish of a great passion curbed and thwarted.

In this democratic age, when deep emotional experiences are not the privilege of the few, but the lot of many, heart break is almost commonplace. We do not notice it as it may have been noted in those chivalric days when only the few had the finer sensibilities that may make great mental suffering possible. So here in the commonplace town of Harvey, in their commonplace homes, amid their commonplace friends and relatives, two commonplace hearts were aching all unsuspected by a commonplace world. And it happened thus:

Anne Sands had opinions about the renomination and reelection of Judge Van Dorn. For Judge Van Dorn's divorce and remarriage had offended Anne Sands.

On the other hand, to Nathan Perry the aspirations of Judge Van Dorn meant nothing but the ambition of a politician in politics. So when Anne and he had fallen into the inevitable discussion of the Van Dorn case, as a part of an afternoon's talk, indignation flashed upon indifference and the girl saw, or thought she saw such a defect in the character of her lover that, being what she was, she had to protest, and he being what he was—he was hurt to the heart. Both

lovers spoke plainly. The thing sounded like a quarrel—their first; and coming from the Sands house into the summer afternoon, Nate Perry decided to go to Brotherton's. He reflected as he walked that Mr. Brotherton's remarks on "showers," which had come to Anne and Nate, might possibly be premature. And the reflection was immensely disquieting.

A practical youth was Nathan Perry, with a mechanical instinct that gloried in adjustment. He loved to tinker and potter and patch things up. Now something was wrong with the gearing of his heart action. His theory was that Anne was for the moment crazy. He could see nothing to get excited about over the renomination and election of Judge Van Dorn. The men in the mine where the youth was working as a miner hated Van Dorn, the people seemed to distrust him as a man more or less, but if he controlled the nominating convention that ended it with Nathan Perry. The Judge's family affairs were in no way related to the nomination, as the youth saw the case. Yet they were affecting the cams and cogs and pulleys of young Mr. Perry's love affairs, and he felt the matter must be repaired, and put in running order. For he knew that love affair was the mainspring of his life. And the mechanic in him—the Yankee that talked in his rasping, high-keyed tenor voice, that shone from his thin, lean face, and cadaverous body, the Yankee in him, the dreaming, sentimental Yankee, half poet and half tinker, fell upon the problem with unbending will and open mind.

So it came to pass that there entered into the affairs of Judge Thomas Van Dorn, an element upon which he did not calculate. For he was dealing only with the material elements of a material universe!

When Nathan Perry came to Brotherton's he sat down in the midst of a discussion of the Judgeship that began in rather etherial terms. For Doctor Nesbit was saying:

"Amos, I've got you cornered if you consider the visible universe. She works like a watch; she's as predestined as a corn sheller. But let me tell you something—she isn't all visible. There's something back of matter—there's another side to the shield. I know mighty well there's a time when my medicine won't help sick folks—and yet they get well.

I've seen a great love flame up in a man's heart or a woman's heart or a child's in a bed of torture, and when medicine wouldn't take hold I've seen love burn through the wall between the worlds, and I have seen help come just as sure as you see the Harvey Hook and Ladder Company coming rattling down Market Street! Funny old world—funny old world—seventy rides around the sun—and then the fireworks." After puffing away to revive his pipe he said: "I sort of got into this way of thinking recently going over this judgeship fight." He smoked meditatively then broke out, "Lord, Lord, what an iron-clad, hog-tight, rock-ribbed, copper-riveted material proposition it is that Tom is putting up. He's bound self-interest with self-interest everywhere. He and Joe Calvin have roped old man Sands in, and every material interest in this whole district is tied up in the Van Dorn candidacy. I'm a child in a cyclone in this fight. The self-interest of the county candidates, of all the deputies who hope two years from now to be county candidates, and all their friends, every straw boss at the shops, in the smelters, in the mines—and all the men who are near them and want to be straw bosses, every merchant who is caught in the old spider's web with a ninety-day note; every street-car conductor, every employee of the light company, every man at the waterworks plant, every man at the gas plant, the telephone linemen—every human being that dances in the great woof of this little spider's web feels the pull of devilish material power."

Amos Adams threw back his grizzled head in a laugh that failed to vocalize. "Well, Jim, according to your account you're liable to get burned and singed and disfigured until you're as useless in politics as this old Amos Adams—the spook chaser!"

There was no bitterness in Amos Adams's voice. "It's all right, Jim—I have no complaint to make against life. Forty years ago Dan Sands got the first girl I ever loved. I went to war; he paid his bounty and married the girl. That was a long time ago. I often think of the girl—it's no lack of faith to Mary. And I have the memory of the war—of that Day at Peach Tree Creek with all the wonderful exulting joy of that charge and what God gave me to do. This but-

ton," he put his thumb under the Loyal Legion emblem in his warped coat lapel, "this button is more fragrant than any flower on earth to my heart. Dan Sands has had five wives; he missed the hardship of the war. He has a son by her. Jim," said Amos Adams as he opened his eyes, "if you knew how it has cut into my heart year by year to see the beautiful soul that Hester Haley gave to Morty decay under the blight of his father—but you can't." He sighed. "Yet there is still her soul in him—gentle, kind, trying to do the right thing—but tied and hobbled by life with his father. Grant may be wrong, Doctor," cried the father, raising his hand excitedly, "he may be crazy, and I know they laugh at him up town here—for a fool and the son of a fool; he certainly doesn't know how he is going to do all the things he dreams of doing—but that is not the point. The important thing is that he is having his dream! For by the Eternal, Jim Nesbit, I'd rather feel that my boy was even a small part of the life force of his planet pushing forward—I'd rather be the father of that boy—I'd rather be old Amos Adams the spook chaser—than Dan Sands with his million. I've been happier, Jim, with the memory of my Mary than he with his five wives. I'd rather be on the point of the drill of life and mangled there, than to have my soul rot in greed."

The Doctor puffed on his pipe. "Well, Amos," he returned quietly, "I suppose if a man wants to get all messed up as one of the points of the drill of life, as you call it—it's easy enough to find a place for the sacrifice. I admire Grant; but someway," his falsetto broke out, "I have thought there was a little something in the bread-and-butter proposition."

"A little, Doctor Jim—but not as much as you'd think!" answered Amos.

"Nevertheless in this fight here in Greeley County, I'm quietly lining up a few county delegates, and picking out a few trusty friends who will show up at the caucuses, and Grant has a handful of crazy Ikes that I am going to use in my business, and if we win it will be a practical proposition —my head against Tom's."

The Doctor rose. Amos Adams stopped him with "Don't be too sure of that, Jim; I got a writing from Mr. Left last night and he says—"

"Hold on, Amos—hold on," squeaked the Doctor's falsetto; "until Mr. Left is registered in the Third Ward—we won't bother with him until after the convention."

The Doctor left the place smiling at Amos and glancing casually at young Mr. Perry. The dissertation had been a hard strain on the practical mind of young Mr. Perry, and while he was fumbling his way through the mazes of what he had heard, Amos Adams left the shop and another practical man very much after Nathan Perry's own heart came in. Daniel Sands had no cosmic problems on his mind with which to befuddle young Perry. Daniel Sands was a seedy little old man of nearly three score years and ten; his dull, fishy eyes framed in red lids looked shiftily at one as though he was forever preoccupied in casting up sums in interest. His skin was splotched and dirty, a kind of scale seemed to be growing over it, and his long, thin nose stuck out of his shaggy, ill-kept whiskers like a sharp snout, attenuated by rooting in money. When he smiled, which was rarely, the false quality of his smile seemed expressed by his false teeth that were forever falling out of place when he loosed his facial muscles. He walked rather stealthily back to the desk where the proprietor of the shop was working; but he spoke loud enough for Nate Perry's practical ear to comprehend the elder man's mission.

"George, I've got to be out of town for the next ten days, and the county convention will meet when I'm gone." He stopped, and cleared his throat. Mr. Brotherton knew what was coming. "I just called to say that we're expecting you to do all you can for Tom." He paused. Mr. Brotherton was about to reply when the old man smiled his false smile and added:

"Of course, we can't afford to let our good Doctor's family affairs interfere with business. And George," he concluded, "just tell the boys to put Morty on in my place. And George, you kind of sit by Morty, and see that he gets his vote in right. Morty's a good boy, George—but he someway doesn't get interested in things as I like to see him. He'll be all right if you'll just fix his ballot in the convention and see that he votes it." He blinked his dull, red eyes at the book seller and dropped his voice.

"I noticed your paper as I passed the note counter just now; some of it will be due while I'm gone; I'll tell 'em to renew it if you want it." He smiled again, and Mr. Brotherton answered, "Very well—I'll see that Morty votes right, Mr. Sands," and solemnly went back to his ledger. And thus the practical mind of Nathan Perry had its first practical lesson in practical politics—a lesson which soon afterwards produced highly practical results.

Up and down Market Street tiptoed Daniel Sands that day, tightening his web of business and politics. Busily he fluttered over the web, his water pipes, his gas pipes, his electric wires. The pathway to the trade of the miners and the men in the shops and smelters lay through his door. Material prosperity for every merchant and every clerk in Market Street lay in the paunch of the old spider, and he could spin it out or draw it in as he chose. It was not usual for him to appear on Market Street. Dr. Nesbit had always been his vicegerent. And often it had pleased the Doctor to pretend that he was seeking their aid as friends and getting it solely upon the high grounds of friendship.

But as the Doctor stood by his office window that day and saw the old spider dancing up and down the web, Dr. Nesbit knew the truth—and the truth was wormwood in his mouth—that he had been only an errand boy between greed in the bank and self-interest in the stores. In a flash, a merciless, cynical flash, he looked into his life in the capital, and there he saw with sickening distinctness that with all his power as a boss, with his control over Senators and Governors and courts and legislatures, he was still the errand boy—that he reigned as boss only because he could be trusted by those who controlled the great aggregations of capital in the state—the railroads, the insurance companies, the brewers, the public service corporations. In the street below walked a flashy youth who went in and out of the saloons in obvious pride of being. His complacent smile, his evident glory in himself, made Dr. Nesbit turn away and shut his eyes in shame. He had loathed the youth as a person unspeakable. Yet the youth also was a messenger—the errand boy of vice in South Harvey who doubtless thought himself a person of great power and consequence. And the difference between an

errand boy of greed and the errand boy of vice was not sufficient to revive the Doctor's spirits. So the Doctor, sadly sobered, left the window. The gay enthusiasm of the diver plunging for the pearl was gone from the depressed little white clad figure. He was finding his pearl a burden rather than a joy.

That evening Morty Sands, resplendent in purple and fine linen—the purple being a gorgeous necktie, and the fine linen a most sumptuous tailor-made shirt waist above a pair of white broadcloth trousers and silk hose, and under a fifty dollar Panama hat, tripped into the Brotherton store for his weekly armload of reading and tobacco.

"Morty," said Mr. Brotherton, after the young man had picked out the latest word in literature and nicotine, "your father was in here to-day with instructions for me to chaperone you through the county convention Saturday,—you'll be on the delegation."

The young man blinked good naturedly. "I haven't got the intellect to go through with it, George,"

"Oh, yes, you have, Morty," returned Mr. Brotherton, expansively. "The Governor wants me to be sure you vote for Van Dorn—that's about all there is in the convention. Old Linen Pants is to name the delegates to the State and congressional conventions—they're trying to let the old man down easy—not to beat him out of his State and congressional leadership."

The young man thought for a moment then smiled up into the big moon-face of Brotherton—"All right, Georgie, I suppose I'll have to cast my unfettered vote for Van Dorn, though as a sporting proposition my sympathies are with the other side."

"Well, say—you orter 'a' heard a talk I heard Doc Nesbit give this afternoon. That old sinner will be shouting on the mourner's bench soon—if he doesn't check up."

Morty looked up from his magazine to say: "George—it's Laura. A man couldn't go with her through all she's gone through without being more of a man for it. When I took a turn in the mining business last spring I found that the people down in South Harvey just naturally love her to death. They'll do more or less for Grant Adams. He's

getting the men organized and they look up to him in a way. But they get right down on their marrow bones and love Laura."

Morty smiled reflectively: "I kind of got the habit myself once—and I seem someway never to have got over it—much! But, she won't even look my way. She takes my money—for her kindergarten. But that is all. She won't let me take her home in my trap, nor let me buy her lunch—why she pays more attention to Grant Adams with his steel claw than to my strong right arm! About all she lets me do is distribute flower seeds. George," he concluded ruefully, "I've toted around enough touch-me-nots and coxcomb seeds this spring for that girl to paint South Harvey ringed, streaked and striped."

There the conversation switched to Captain Morton's stock company, and the endeavor to get the Household Horse on the market. The young man listened and smiled, was interested, as George Brotherton intended he should be. But Morty went out saying that he had no money but his allowance—which was six months overdrawn—and there the matter rested.

In a few days, a free people arose and nominated their delegates to the Greeley County convention and the night before the event excitement in Harvey was intense. There could be no doubt as to the state of public sentiment. It was against Tom Van Dorn. But on the other hand, no one seriously expected to defeat him. For every one knew that he controlled the organization—even against the boss. Yet vaguely the people hoped that their institutions would in some way fail those who controlled, and would thus register public sentiment. But the night the delegates were elected, it seemed apparent that Van Dorn had won. Yet both sides claimed the victory. And among others of the free people elected to the Convention to cast a free vote for Judge Van Dorn, was Nathan Perry. He was put on the delegation to look after his father's interests. Van Dorn was a practical man, Kyle Perry was a practical man and they knew Nate Perry was a practical youth. But while Tom Van Dorn slept upon the assurance of victory, Nate Perry was perturbed.

CHAPTER XXVIII

WHEREIN MORTY SANDS MAKES A FEW SENSIBLE REMARKS IN PUBLIC

WHEN Mortimer Sands came down town Saturday morning, two hours before the convention met, he found the courthouse yard black with prospective delegates and also he found that the Judge's friends were in a majority in the crowd. So evident was their ascendancy that the Nesbit forces had conceded to the Judge the right to organize the convention. At eleven o'clock the crowd, merchants, clerks, professional men, working men in their Sunday clothes, delegates from the surrounding country towns, and farmers—a throng of three hundred men, began to crowd into the hot "Opera House." So young Mr. Sands, with his finger in a book to keep his place, followed the crowd to the hall, and took his seat with the Fourth Ward delegation. Having done this he considered that his full duty to God and man had been performed. He found Nathan Perry sitting beside him and said:

"Well, Nate, here's where Anne's great heart breaks—I suppose?"

Nathan nodded and asked: "I presume it's all over but the shouting."

"All over," answered the elder young man as he dived into his book. As he read he realized that the convention had chosen Captain Morton—a partisan of the Judge—for chairman. The hot, stifling air of the room was thick with the smoke of cheap tobacco. Morty Sands grew nervous and irritated during the preliminary motions of the organization. Even as a sporting event the odds on Van Dorn were too heavy to promote excitement. He went out for a breath of air. When he reëntered Judge Van Dorn was making the opening speech of the convention. It was a fervid effort;

the Spanish war was then in progress so the speech was full of allusions to what the Judge was pleased to call "libertah" and "our common countrah" and our sacred "dutah" to "humanitah." Naturally the delegates who were for the Judge's renomination displayed much enthusiasm, and it was a noisy moment. When the Judge closed his remarks—tearfully of course—and took his seat as chairman of the Fourth Ward delegation, which was supposed to be for him unanimously as it was his home ward, Morty noticed that while the Judge sat grand and austere in the aisle seat with his eyes partly closed as one who is recovering from a great mental effort, his half-closed eyes were following Mr. Joseph Calvin, who was buzzing about the room distributing among the delegates meal tickets and saloon checks good for food for man and beast at the various establishments of public entertainment.

Morty learned from George Brotherton that as the county officers were to be renominated without opposition, and as the platform had been agreed to the day before, and as the county central committeemen had been chosen the night before at the caucuses, the convention was to be a short horse soon curried. Of course, Captain Morton as permanent chairman made a speech—with suitable eulogies to the boys who wore the blue. It was the speech the convention had heard many times before, but always enjoyed—and as he closed he asked rather grandly, "and now what is the further pleasure of the convention?"

It was Mr. Calvin's pleasure, as expressed in a motion, that the secretary be instructed to cast the vote of the convention for the renomination of the entire county ticket, and further that Senator James Nesbit, in view of his leadership of the party in the State, be requested to name the delegates to the State and congressional conventions and that Judge Thomas Van Dorn—cheers led by Dick Bowman—Thomas Van Dorn be requested to name the delegates to the judicial district convention. Cheers and many cries of no, no, no, greeted the Calvin motion. It was seconded and stated by the chair and again cheered and roared at. Dr. Nesbit rose, and in his mild, treble voice protested against the naming of the delegates to the State and congressional and judicial con-

ventions. He said that while it had been the practice in the past, he was of the opinion that the time had come to let the Convention itself choose by wards and precincts and townships its delegates to these conventions. He said further that as for the State and congressional delegates, they couldn't pick a delegation of twenty men in the room if they tried, that would not contain a majority which he could work with. At which there was cheering from the anti-Van Dorn crowd—but it was clear that they were in the minority. No further discussion seemed to be expected and the Captain was about to put the motion, when from among the delegates from South Harvey there arose the red poll of Grant Adams. From the Harvey delegates he met the glare of distrust due from any crowd of merchants and clerks to any labor agitator. Morty could see from the face of Dr. Nesbit that he was surprised. Judge Van Dorn, who sat near young Sands, looked mildly interested. After he was recognized, Grant in an impassioned voice began to talk of the inherent right of the Nesbit motion, providing that each precinct or ward delegation could name its own delegates to the State, congressional and judicial conventions.

If the motion prevailed, Judge Van Dorn would have a divided delegation from Greeley county to the judicial convention, as some of the precincts and wards were against him, though a majority of the united convention was for him. Grant Adams, swinging his iron claw, was explaining this to the convention. He was appealing passionately for the right of proportional representation; holding that the minority had rights of representation that the majority should not deny.

Judge Van Dorn, without rising, had sneered across the room in a snarling voice: "Ah, you socialist!" Once he had growled: "None of your red mouthed ranting here!" Finally, as it was evident that Grant's remarks were interesting the workmen on the delegations, Van Dorn, still seated, called out:

"Here, you—what right have you to address this convention?"

"I am a regularly accredited delegate from South Harvey, holding the proxy—"

He got no further.

The Van Dorn delegates roared, "Put him out. No proxies go," and began hooting and jeering. It was obvious that Van Dorn had the crowd with him. He let them roar at Grant, who stood quietly, demanding from time to time that the chair should restore order. Captain Morton hammered the table with his gavel, but the Van Dorn crowd continued to hoot and howl. Finally Judge Van Dorn rose and with great elaborateness of parliamentary form addressed the chair asking to be permitted to ask his friend with a proxy one question.

The two men faced each other savagely, like characters symbolizing forces in a play; complaisance and discontent. Behind Grant was the unrest and upheaval of a class coming into consciousness and tremendously dynamic, while Van Dorn stood for those who had won their fight and were static and self-satisfied. He twirled his mustache. Grant raised his steel claw as if to strike; Van Dorn spoke, and in a barking, vicious, raucous tone intended to annihilate his adversary, asked:

"Will you tell this convention in the interest of fairness, what, if any, personal and private motives you have in helping Dr. Nesbit inject a family quarrel into public matters in this county?"

A moment's silence greeted the lawyer's insolently framed question. Mortimer Sands saw Dr. Nesbit go white, start to rise, and sit down, and saw dawning on the face of Grant Adams the realization of what the question meant. But before he could speak the mob broke loose; hisses, cheers and the roar of partisan and opposition filled the room. Grant Adams tried to speak; but no one would hear him. He started down the aisle toward Van Dorn, his red hair flashing like a banner of wrath, menacing the Judge with the steel claw upraised. Dr. Nesbit stopped Grant. The insult had been so covert, so cowardly, that only in resenting its implication would there be scandal.

Mortimer Sands closed his book. He saw Judge Van Dorn laugh, and heard him say to George Brotherton who sat beside young Sands:

"I plugged that damn pie-face!"

Nathan Perry, the practical young man sitting in the Fourth ward delegation, heard the Judge and nudged Morty Sands. Morty Sands's sporting blood rose in him. "The pup," he whispered to Nate. "He's taking a shot at Laura."

The crowd gradually grew calm. There being no further discussion, Captain Morton put the motion of Joseph Calvin to let the majority of the convention name all delegates to the superior conventions. The roar of ayes overwhelmed the blat of noes. It was clear that the Calvin motion had carried. The Doctor was defeated. But before the chair announced the vote the pompadour of the little man rose quickly as he stood in the middle aisle and asked in his piping treble for a vote by wards and precincts.

In the moment of silence that followed the Doctor's suggestion, Nathan Perry's face, which gradually had been growing stony and hard, cracked in a mean smile as he leaned over to Morty and whispered:

"Morty, can you stand for that—that damned hound's snap at Laura Van? By grabby I can't—I won't!"

"Well, let's raise hell, Nate—I'm with you. I owe him nothing," said the guileless and amiable Morty.

Judge Van Dorn rose grandly and with great elegance of diction agreed with the Doctor's "excellent suggestion." So tickets were passed about containing the words yes and no, and hats were passed down delegation lines and the delegates put the ballots in the hats and the chairmen of delegations appointed tellers and so the ballots were counted. When the Fourth ward balloting was finished, Judge Van Dorn looked puzzled. He was three votes short of unanimity. His vanity was pricked. He believed he had a solid delegation and proposed to have it. When in the roll call the Fourth ward delegation was reached (it was the fourth precinct on the secretary's roll) the Judge, as chairman of the Fourth warders, rose, blandly and complacently, and announced: "Ward Four casts twenty-five votes 'yes' and three votes 'no.' I demand a poll of the delegation."

George Brotherton rose when the clerk of the convention called the roll and voted a weak, husky 'no' and sat down sheepishly under the Judge's glare.

Down the list came the clerk reading the names of delegates. Finally he called "Mortimer Sands," and the young man rose, smiling and calm, and looking the Judge fairly in the eye cried, "I vote no!"

Then pandemonium broke loose. The convention was bedlam. The friends of the Judge were confounded. They did not know what it meant.

The clerk called Nathan Perry.

"No," he cried as he looked maliciously into the Judge's beady eyes.

Then there was no doubt. For the relations of Wright & Perry were so close to Daniel Sands that no one could mistake the meaning of young Perry's vote, and then had not the whole town read of the "showers" for Anne Sands? Those who opposed the Judge were whispering that the old spider had turned against the Judge. Men who were under obligations to the Traders' Bank were puzzled but not in doubt. There was a general buzzing among the delegations. The desertion of Mortimer Sands and Nathan Perry was one of those wholly unexpected events that sometimes make panics in politics. The Judge could see that in one or two cases delegations were balloting again. "Fifth ward," called the clerk.

"Fifth ward not ready," replied the chairman.

"Hancock township, Soldier precinct," called the clerk.

"Soldier precinct not ready," answered the chairman.

The next precinct cast its vote No, and the next precinct cast its vote 7 yes and 10 no and a poll was demanded and the vote was a tie. The power of the name of Sands in Greeley county was working like a yeast.

"Well, boys," whispered Mr. Brotherton to Morty as two townships were passed while they were reballoting, "Well, boys—you sure have played hell." He was mopping his red brow, and to a look of inquiry from Morty Mr. Brotherton explained: "You've beaten the Judge. They all think that it's your father's idea to knife him, and the foremen of the mines who are running these county delegations and the South Harvey contingent are changing their votes—that's how!"

In another instant Morty Sands was on his feet. He

stood on a seat above the crowd, a slim, keen-faced, oldish figure. When he called upon the chairman a hush fell over the crowd. When he began to speak he could feel the eyes of the crowd boring into him. "I wish to state," he said hesitatingly, then his courage came, "that my vote against this resolution, was due entirely to the inferential endorsement of Judge Thomas Van Dorn," this time the anti-Van Dorn roar was overwhelming, deafening, "that the resolution contained."

Another roar, it seemed to the Judge as from a pit of beasts, greeted this period. "But I also wish to make it clear," continued the young man, "that in this position I am representing only my own views. I have not been instructed by my father how to cast this ballot. For you know as well as I how he would vote." The roar from the anti-Van Dorn crowd came back again, stronger than ever. The convention had put its own interpretation upon his words. They knew he was merely making it plainer that the old spider had caught Judge Van Dorn in the web, and for some reason was sucking out his vitals. Morty sat down with the sense of duty well done, and again Mr. Brotherton leaned over and whispered, "Well, you did a good job—you put the trimmings on right—hello, we're going to vote again." Again the young man jumped to his feet and cried amid the noise, which sank almost instantly as they saw who was trying to speak: "I tell you, gentlemen, that so far as I know my father is for Judge Van Dorn," but the crowd only laughed, and it was evident that they thought Morty was playing with them. As Morty Sands sat down Nathan Perry rose and in his high, strong, wire-edged tenor cried: "Men, I'm voting only myself. But when a man shows doghair as Judge Van Dorn showed it to this convention in that question to Grant Adams—all hell can't hold me to—" But the roar of the crowd drowned the close of the sentence. The mob knew nothing of the light that had dawned in Nathan Perry's heart. The crowd knew only that the son and the future son-in-law of the old spider had turned on Van Dorn, and that he was marked for slaughter so it proceeded with the butchering which gave it great personal felicity. Men howled their real convictions and Tom

Van Dorn's universe tottered. He tried to speak, but was howled down.

"Vote—vote, vote," they cried. The Fourth ward balloted again and the vote stood "Yes, fifteen, no, twelve," and the proud face of the suave Judge Van Dorn turned white with rage, and the red scar flickered like lightning across his forehead. The voting could not proceed. For men were running about the room, and Joseph Calvin was hovering over the South Harvey delegation like a buzzard. Morty Sands suspected Calvin's mission. The young man rose and ran to Dr. Nesbit and whispered: "Doctor, Nate's got seven hundred dollars in the bank—see what Calvin is doing? I can get it up here in three minutes. Can you use it to help?"

The Doctor ran his hand over his graying pompadour and smiled and shook his head. In the din he leaned over and piped. "Touch not, taste not, handle not, Morty—I've sworn off. Teetotler," he laughed excitedly. Young Sands saw a bill flash in Mr. Calvin's hands and disappear in Dick Bowman's pockets.

"No law against it," chirped the Doctor, "except God Almighty's, and He has no jurisdiction in Judge Tom's district."

As they stood watching Calvin peddle his bills the convention saw what he was doing. A fear seized the decent men in the convention that all who voted for Van Dorn would be suspected of receiving bribes. The balloting proceeded. In five minutes the roll call was finished. Then before the result was announced George Brotherton was on his feet saying, "The Fourth ward desires to change her vote," and while Brotherton was announcing the complete desertion of the Fourth ward delegation, Judge Van Dorn left the hall. Men in mob are cruel and mad, and the pack howled at the vain man as he slunk through the crowd to the door.

After that, delegation after delegation changed its vote and before the result was announced Mr. Calvin withdrew his motion, and the spent convention only grunted its approval. Then it was that Mugs Bowman crowded into the room and handed Nathan Perry this note scrawled on brown butcher's paper in a hand he knew. "I have this moment learned that you are a delegate and must take a public stand.

Don't let a word I have said influence you. I stand by you whatever you do. Use your own judgment; follow your conscience and 'with God be the rest.'" "A. S."

Nathan Perry folded the note, and as he put it in his vest pocket he felt the proud beat of his heart. Fifteen minutes later when the convention adjourned for noon, Nathan and Morty Sands ran plumb into Thomas Van Dorn, sitting in the back room of the bank, wet eyed and blubbering. The Judge was slumped over the big, shining table, his jaws trembling, his hands fumbling the ink stands and paper weights. His eyes were staring and nervous, and beside him a whiskey bottle and glass told their story. The man rose, holding the table, and shrieked:

"You damned little fice dog, you—" this to Morty, "you—you—" Morty dashed around the table toward the Judge, but before he could reach the man to strike, the Judge was moving his jaws impotently, and grasping the thin air. His mouth foamed as he fell and he lay, a shivering, white-eyed horror, upon the floor. The bank clerks lifted the figure to a leather couch, and some one summoned Doctor Nesbit.

The Doctor saw the whiskey bottle half emptied and saw the white faced, prostrate figure. The Doctor sent the clerks from the room as he worked with the unconscious man, and piped to Morty as he worked, "Nothing serious—heat—temper, whiskey—and vanity and vexation of spirit; 'vanity of vanities—all is vanity—saith the preacher.'" Morty and Nathan left the room as the man's eyes opened and the Doctor with a woman's tenderness brought the wretched, broken, shattered bundle of pride back to consciousness.

For years this became George Brotherton's favorite story. He first told it to Henry Fenn thus:

"Say, Henry, lemme tell you about old man Sands. He come in here the day after he got back from Chicago to wrestle with me for letting Morty vote against Tom. Well—say—I'm right here to tell you that was some do—all right, all right! You know he thought I got Morty and Nate to vote that way and the old spider came hopping in here like a grand-daddy long-legs and the way he let out on your humble—well, say—say! Holler—you'd orto heard him holler! Just spat pizen—wow! and as for me who'd got the

lad into the trouble—as for me," Mr. Brotherton paused, folded his hand over his expansive abdomen and sighed deeply, as one who recalls an experience too deep for language. "Well, say—I tried to tell him I didn't have anything to do with it, but he was wound up with an eight-day spring! I knew it was no use to talk sense to him while he was batting his lights at me like a drunk switchman on a dark night, but when he was clean run down I leans over the counter and says as polite as a pollywog, 'Most kind and noble duke,' says I, 'you touch me deeply by your humptious words!' says I, 'let me assure you, your kind and generous sentiments will never be erased from the tablets of my most grateful memory'—just that way.

"Well, say—" and here Mr. Brotherton let out his laugh that came down like the cataract at Ladore, "pretty soon Morty sails in fresh as a daisy and asks:

" 'Father been in here?'

" 'Check one father,' says I.

" 'Raising hell?' he asks

" 'Check one hell,' says I.

" 'Well, sir,' says he, 'I'm exceedingly sorry.'

" 'One sorrow check,' says I.

" 'Sincerely and truly sorry, George,' he repeats and 'Two sorrows check,' I repeats and he goes on: 'Look here, George, I know father, and until I can get the truth into him, which won't be for a week or two, I suppose he may try to ruin you!'

" 'Check one interesting ruin,' says I.

"But he brought down his hand on the new case till I shuddered for the glass, and well, say—what do you think that boy done? He pulls out a roll of money big enough to choke a cow and puts it on the case and says: 'I sold my launch and drew every dollar I had out of the bank before father got home. Here, take it; you may need it in your business until father calms down.'

"Wasn't that white! I couldn't get him to put the roll back and along comes Cap Morton, and when I wouldn't take it the old man glued on to him, and I'm a goat if Morty didn't lend it to the Captain, with the understanding I could have it any time inside of six months, and the Captain

could use it afterward. That's where the Captain got his money to build his shop."

It cost Daniel Sands five thousand dollars in hard earned money, not that he earned the money, but it was hard-earned nevertheless, to undo the work of that convention, and nominate and elect Thomas Van Dorn district Judge upon an independent ticket. And even when the work was done, the emptiness of the honor did not convince the Judge that this is not a material world. He hugged the empty honor to his heart and made a vast pretense that it was real.

CHAPTER XXIX

BEING NOT A CHAPTER BUT AN INTERLUDE

HERE and now this story must pause for a moment. It has come far from the sunshine and prairie grass where it started. Tall elm trees have grown from the saplings that were stuck in the sod thirty years before, and they limit the vision. No longer can one see over the town across the roofs of Market Street into the prairie. No longer even can one see from Harvey the painted sky at night that marks South Harvey and the industrial towns of the Wahoo Valley. Harvey is shut in; we all are sometimes by our comforts. The dreams of the pioneers that haloed the heads of those who came to Harvey in those first days—those dreams are gone. Here and there one is trapped in brick or wood or stone or iron; and another glows in a child or walks the weary ways of man as a custom or an institution or as a law that brought only a part of the blessings which it promised.

And the equality of opportunity for which these pioneers crossed the Mississippi and came into the prairie uplands of the West—where is that evanescent spirit? Certainly it touched Daniel Sands's shoulder and he followed it; it beckoned Dr. Nesbit and he followed it a part of the journey. Surely Kyle Perry saw it for years, and Captain Morton was destined to find it, gorgeous and iridescent. Amos Adams might have had it for the asking, but he sought it only for others. It never came to Dooley and Hogan, and Williams and Bowman and those who went into the Valley. Did it die, one may ask; or did it vanish like a prairie stream under the sand to flow on subterranean and appear again strong, purified and refreshed, a powerful current to carry mankind forward? The world that was in the flux of dreams that day when Harvey began, had hardened to reality thirty years after. Men were going their appointed ways working out in circumstances the equation of their life's philosophy.

And now while the story waits, we may well look at three pictures. They do not speed the narrative; they hardly point morals to adorn this tale. But they may show us how living a creed consistently colors one's life. For after all the realities of life are from within. Events, environment, fortune good or bad do not color life, or give it richness and form and value. But in living a creed one makes his picture. So let us look at Thomas Van Dorn, who boasted that he could beat God at his own game, and did. For all that he wanted came to him, wealth and fame and power, and the women he desired.

Judge and Mrs. Van Dorn and her dog are riding by in their smart rubber tired trap, behind a highly checked horse and with the dog between them. They are not talking. The man is looking at his gloved hands, at the horse, at the street,—where occasionally he bows and smiles and never by any chance misses bowing and smiling to any woman who might be passing. His wife, dressed stiffly and smartly, is looking straight ahead, with as weary a face as that of the Hungarian Spitz beside her. Time, in the Temple of Love on the hill has not worn her bloom off; it is all there—and more; but the additional bloom, the artificial bloom, is visible. When she smiles, as she sometimes smiles at the men friends of the Judge who greet the pair, it is an elaborately mechanical smile, with a distinct beginning, climax, and ending. Some way it fails to convince one that she has any pleasure in it. The smile still is beautiful, exceedingly beautiful—but only as a picture. When the smile is garnished with words the voice is low and musical—but too low and too obviously musical. It does not reveal the soul of Margaret Van Dorn—the soul that glowed in the girl who came to Prospect Township fifteen years before, with banners flying to lay siege to Harvey. The soul that glowed through those wonderful eyes upon Henry Fenn—where is it? She has not been crossed in any desire of her life. She has enjoyed every form of pleasure that money could buy for her; she is delving into books that make the wrinkles come between her eyebrows, and is rubbing the wrinkles out and the ideas from the books as fast as they come. She is droning a formula for happiness, learned of the books that make her head ache,

and is repeating over and over, "God is good, and I am God," as one who would plaster truth upon his consciousness by the mere repetition of it. But the truth does not help her. So she sits beside her husband, a wax work figure of a woman, and he seems to treat her as a wax figure. For he is clearly occupied with his own affairs.

When he is not bowing and smiling, a sneer is on his face. And when he speaks to the horse his voice is harsh and mean. He holds an unlighted cigar in his mouth as a terrier might hold a loathed rat; working the muscles of his lips at times viciously but saying nothing. The soft, black hat of his youthful days is replaced by a high, stiff, squarely sawed felt hat which he imagines gives him great dignity. His clothes have become so painfully scrupulous in their exact conformation to the mode that he looks wooden. He has given so much thought to the subject of "wherewithal shall ye be clothed," that the thought in some queer spiritual curdling has appeared in the unyielding texture of his artificial tailored skin, that seems to be a part of another consciousness than his own.

Moreover, those first days he spent after the convention have chipped the suavity from his countenance, and have written upon the bland, complacent face all the cynicism of his nature. Triumph makes cynicism arrogant, so the man is losing his mask. His nature is leering out of his eyes, snarling out of his mouth, and where the little, lean lines have pared away the flesh from his nose, a greedy, self-seeking pride is peering from behind a great masterful nose. Thomas Van Dorn should be in the adolescence of maturity; but he is in the old age of adolescence. His skin has no longer the soft olive texture of youth; it is brown and mottled and leathery. His lips—his lips once full and red, are pursing and leadening.

Thus the pair go through the May twilight; and when the electric lights begin to flash out at the corners, thus the Van Dorns ride before the big black mass of the temple of love that looms among the young trees upon the lawn. The woman alights from the trap. She pauses a moment upon the stone block at the curbing. The man makes no sign of moving. She takes the dog from the seat, and puts it on

the ground. The man gathers the reins tightly in his hands, then drops them again, lights his cigar, and says behind his hands: "I'm going back downtown."

"Oh, you are?" echoes the woman.

"Yes, I am," replies the man sharply.

The woman is walking up the wide parking, with the dog. She makes no reply. The man looks at her a second or two, and drives away, cutting the horse to a mad speed as he rounds the corner.

Through the wide doors into the broad hall, up the grand staircase, through the luxurious rooms goes the high Priestess of the Temple of Love. It is a lonely house. For it is still in a state of social siege. So far as Harvey is concerned, no one has entered it. So they live rather quiet lives.

On that May evening the mistress of the great house sits in her bed room by the mild electric, trying book after book, and putting each down in disgust. Philosophy fails to hold her attention—poetry annoys her; fiction—the book of the moment, which happened to be "The Damnation of Theron Ware," makes her wince, and so she reaches under the reading stand, and brings out from the bottom of a pile of magazines a salacious novel filled with stories of illicit amours. This she reads until her cheeks burn and her lips grow dry and she hears the roll of a buggy down the street, and knows that it must be nearly midnight and that her mate is coming. She slips the book back into its place of concealment, picks up "The Harmonious Universe," and walks with some show of grandeur in her trailing garments down the stairs to greet her lord.

"You up?" he asks. He glances at the book and continues: "Reading that damn trash? Why don't you read Browning or Thackeray or—if you want philosophy Emerson or Carlyle? That's rot."

He puts what scorn he can into the word rot, and in her sweetest, falsest, baby voice the woman answers:

"My soul craves communion with the infinite and would seek the deeper harmonies. I just love to wander the wide wastes between the worlds like I've been doing to-night."

The man grabs the book from her, and finding her finger in a place far beyond the end of the cut leaves, he looks at her,

and sneers a profane sneer and passes up the stairs. She stares after him as he slowly mounts, without joy in his tread, and she follows him lightly as he goes to his room. She pauses before the closed door for a lonely moment and then sighs and goes her way. She mumbles, "God is good and I am God," many times to herself, but she lies down to sleep wondering whimperingly in a half-doze if Pelleas and Melisande found things so dreadfully disillusioning after all they suffered for love and for each other. As a footnote to this picture may we not ask:

Is the thing called love worth having at the cost of character? The trouble with the poets is that they take their ladies and gentlemen of pliable virtue and uncertain rectitude, only to the altar. One may ask with some degree of propriety if the duplicity they practiced, the lying they did and justified by the sacredness of their passion, the crimes they committed and the meannesses they went through to attain their ends were after all worth while. Also one may ask if the characters they made—or perhaps only revealed, were not such as to make them wholly miserable when they began to "live happily ever after"? A symposium entitled "Is Love Really Worth It?" by such distinguished characters as Helen of Troy, Mrs. Potiphar and Cleopatra, might be improving reading, if the ladies were capable of telling the truth after lives of dissimulation and deceit.

But let us leave philosophy and look at another picture. This time we have the Morton family.

The Captain's feet are upon the shining fender. There is no fire in the stove. It is May. But it is the Captain's habit to warm his feet there when he is in the house at night, and he never fails to put them upon the fender and go through his evening routine. First it is his paper; then it is his feet; then it is his apple, and finally a formal discussion of what they will have for breakfast, with the Captain always voting for hash, and declaring that there are potatoes enough left over and meat enough unused to make hash enough for a regiment. But before he gets to the hash question, the Captain this evening leads off with this:

"Curious thing about spring." The world of education, reading its examination papers, concurs in silence. The

worlds of fashion and of the fine arts also assenting, the Captain goes on: "Down in South Harvey to-day; kind o' dirty down there; looks kind of smoky and tin cannery, and woe-begone, like that class of people always looks, but 'y gory, girls, it's just as much spring down there as it is up here, only more so! eh? I says to Laura, looking like a full bloom peach tree herself in her kindergarten, says I, 'Laura, it's terrible pretty down here when you get under the smoke and the dirt. Every one just a lovin',' says I, 'and going galloping into life kind of regardless. There's Nate and Anne, and there's Violet and Hogan, and there's a whole mess of fresh married couples in Little Italy, and the Huns and Belgians are all broke out with the blamedest dose of love y' ever see! And they's whole rafts of 'em to be married before June!' Well, Laura, she laughed and if it wasn't like pouring spring itself out of a jug. Spring," he mused, "ain't it curious about spring!"

Champing his apple the Captain gesticulates slowly with his open pocket knife, "Love"—he reflects; then backs away from his discussion and begins anew: "Less take—say Anne and Nate, a happy couple—him a lean, eagle-beaked New England kind of a man; her—a little quick-gaited, big-eyed woman and sping! out of the Providence of Goddlemighty comes a streak of some kind of creepy, fuzzy lightning and they're struck dumb and blind and plumb crazy—eh?"

He champs for a time on the apple, "Eighteen sixty-one—May, sixty-one—me a tidy looking young buck—girl—beautiful girl with reddish brown hair and bluest eyes in the world. Sping! comes the lightning, and melts us together and the whole universe goes pink and rose-colored. No sense—neither of us—no more'n Anne and Nate, just one idea. I can't think of nothing but her—war isn't much; shackles on four millions slaves—no consequence; the Colonel caught us kissing in his tent the day I left for the army; union forever—mere circumstance in the lives of two crazy people—in a world mostly eyes and lips and soft hands and whispers and flowers, eh—and—" The Captain does not finish his sentence.

He rises, puts his apple core on the table, and says after

a great sigh: "And so we bloomed and blossomed and come to fruit and dried up and blowed away, and here they are—all the rest of 'em—ready to bloom—and may God help 'em and keep 'em." He pauses, "Help 'em and keep 'em and when they have dried up and blowed away—let 'em remember the perfume clean to the end!" He turns away from the girls, wipes his eyes with his gnarled fingers, and after clearing his throat says: "Well, girls, how about hash for breakfast—what say?"

The wheels of the Judge's buggy grate upon the curbing nearby and the Captain remarks: "Judge Tom gets in a little later every night now. I heard him dump her in at eight, and here it is nearly eleven—pretty careless,—pretty careless; he oughtn't to be getting in this late for four or five years yet—what say?" Public opinion again is divided. Fashion and the fine arts hold that it is Margaret's fault and that she is growing to be too much of a poseur; but the schools, which are the bulwarks of our liberties, maintain that he is just as bad as she. And what is more to the point—such is the contention of the eldest Miss Morton of the fourth grade in the Lincoln school, he has driven around to the school twice this spring to take little Lila out riding, and even though her mother has told the teachers to let the child go if she cared to, the little girl would not go and he was mean to the principal and insolent, though Heaven knows it is not the principal's fault, and if the janitor hadn't been standing right there—but it really makes little difference what would have happened; for the janitor in every school building, as every one knows, is a fierce and awesome creature who keeps more dreadful things from happening that never would have happened than any other single agency in the world.

The point which the eldest Miss Morton was accenting was this, that he should have thought of Lila before he got his divorce.

Now the worlds of fashion and the fine arts and the schools themselves, bulwarks that they are, do not realize how keenly a proud man's heart must be touched if day by day he meets the little girl upon the street, sees her growing out of babyhood into childhood, a sweet, bright, lovable

child, and he yearns for something sincere, something that has no poses, something that will love him for himself. So he swallows a lump of pride as large as his handsome head, and drives to the school house to see his child—and is denied. In the Captain's household they do not know what that means. For in the Captain's household which includes a six room house—not counting the new white painted bathroom, the joint product of the toil of the handsome Miss Morton and the eldest Miss Morton, and not counting the basket for the kitten christened Epaminondas, and maintained by the youngest Miss Morton over family protests—in the Captain's household there is peace and joy, if one excepts the numbing fear of a "step" that sometimes prostrates the eldest Miss Morton and her handsome sister; a fear that shelters their father against the wily designs of their sex upon a meek and defenseless and rather obliging gentleman. So they cannot put themselves in the place of the rich and powerful neighbors next door. The Mortons hear the thorns crackling under the pot, but they cannot appreciate the heat.

And now we come to the last picture.

It is still an evening in May!

"Well, how is the missionary to South Harvey," chirrups the Doctor as he mounts the steps, and sees his daughter, waiting for him on the veranda. She looks cool and fresh and beautiful. Her eyes and her skin glow with health and her face beams upon him out of a soul at peace.

"She's all right," returns the daughter, smiling. "How's the khedive of Greeley county?"

As the Doctor mounts the steps she continues: "Sit down, father—I've something on my mind." To her father's inquiring face she replied, "It's Lila. Her father has been after her again. She just came home crying as though her little heart would break. It's so pitiful—she loves him; that is left over from her babyhood; but she is learning someway—perhaps from the children, perhaps from life—what he has done—and when he tries to attract her—she shrinks away from him."

"And he knows why—he knows why, Laura." The Doctor taps the floor softly with his cane. "It isn't all gone

—Tom's heart, I mean. Somewhere deep in his consciousness he is hungering for affection—for respect—for understanding. You haven't seen Tom's eyes recently?" The daughter makes no reply. "I have," he continues. "They're burned out—kind of glassy—scummed over with the searing of the hell he carries in his heart—like the girls' eyes down in the Row. For he is dying at the heart—burning out with everything he has asked for in his hands, yet turning to Lila!"

"Father," she says with her eyes brimming, "I'm not angry with Tom—only sorry. He hasn't hurt me—much—when it's all figured out. I still have my faith—my faith in folks—and in God! Really to take away one's faith is the only wrong one can do to another!"

The father says, "The chief wrong he did you was when he married you. It was nobody's fault; I might have stopped it—but no man can be sure of those things. It was just one of the inevitable mistakes of youth, my dear, that come into our lives, one way or another. They fall upon the just and the unjust—without any reference to deserts."

She nods her assent and they sit listening to the sounds of the closing day—to the vesper bell in the Valley, to the hum of the trolley bringing its homecomers up from the town; to the drone of the five o'clock whistles in South Harvey, to the rattle of homebound buggies. Twice the daughter starts to speak. The second time she stops the Doctor pipes up, "Let it come—out with it—tell your daddy if anything is on your mind." She smiles up into his mobile face, to find only sympathy there. So she speaks, but she speaks hesitatingly.

"I believe that I am going to be happy—really and truly happy!" She does not smile but looks seriously at her father as she presses his hand and pats it. "I am finding my place—doing my work—creating something—not the home that I once hoped for—not the home that I would have now, but it is something good and worth while. It is self respect in me and self respect in those wives and mothers and children in South Harvey. All over the place I find its roots—the shrivelled parching roots of self-respect, and the aspiration that grows with self respect. Sometimes I see it in a ger-

anium flowering in a tomato can, set in a window; oftentimes in a cheap lace curtain; occasionally in a struggling, stunted yellow rose bush in the hard-beaten earth of a dooryard; or in a second hand wheezy cabinet organ in some front bedroom—in a thousand little signs of aspiration, I find America asserting itself among these poor people, and as I cherish these things I find happiness asserting itself in my life. So it's my job, my consecrated job in this earth—to water the geranium, to prune the rose, to mulch the roots of self-respect among these people, and I am happy, father, happier every day that I walk that way."

She looks wistfully into her father's face. "Father, you won't quite understand me when I tell you that the tomato cans with their geraniums behind those gray lace curtains, that make Harvey people smile, are really not tomato cans at all. They are social dynamite bombs that one day will blow into splinters and rubbish the injustices, the cruel injustices of life that the poor suffer at the hands of their exploiters. The geranium is the flower, the spring flower of the divine discontent, which some day shall bear great and wonderful fruit."

"Rather a swift pace you're setting for a fat man, Laura," pipes the Doctor, adding earnestly: "There you go talking like Grant Adams! Don't let Grant Adams fool you, child: the end of the world isn't here. Grant's a good boy, Laura, and I like him; but he's getting a kind of Millerite notion that we're about to put on white robes and go straight up to glory, politically and socially and every which way, in a few years, and there's nothing to it. Grant's a good son, and a good brother, and a good friend and neighbor, but"—the Doctor pounds his chair arm vehemently, "there are bats, my dear, bats in his belfry just the same. Don't get excited when you see Grant mount his haystack to jump into the crack o' doom for the established order!"

The daughter smiles at him, but she answers:

"Perhaps Grant is touched—touched with the mad impatience of God's fools, father. I don't always follow Grant. He goes his way and I go mine. But I am sure of this, that the thing which will really start South Harvey, and all the South Harveys in the world out of their dirt and misery, and

vice, is not our dreams for them, but their dreams for themselves. They must see the vision. They must aspire. They must feel the impulse to sacrifice greatly, to consecrate themselves deeply, to give and give and give of themselves that their children may know better things. And it is my work to arouse their dreams, to inspire their visions, to make them yearn for better living. I am trying to teach them to use and to love beautiful things, that they may be restless among ugly things. I think beauty only serves God as the handmaiden of discontent! And, father, way down deep in my heart—I know—I know surely that I must do this—that it is my reason for being—now that life has taken the greater joy of home from me. So," she concludes solemnly; "these people whom I love, they need me, but father, God and you only know how I need them. I don't know about Grant,—I mean why he is going his solitary way, but perhaps somewhere in his heart there is a wound! Perhaps all of God's fools—those who live queer, unnormal self-forgetting lives, are the broken and rejected pieces of life's masonry which the builder is using in his own wise way. As for the plan, it is not ours. Grant and I, broken spawl in the rising edifice, we and thousands like us, odd pieces that chink in yet hold the strain—we must be content to hold the load and know always—always know that after all the wall is rising! That is enough."

And now we must put aside the pictures and get on with the story.

CHAPTER XXX

GRANT ADAMS PREACHING A MESSAGE OF LOVE RAISES THE VERY DEVIL IN HARVEY

THE most dramatic agency in life is time—time that escapes the staged drama. The passing years, the ceaseless chiselling of continuous events upon a soul, the reaction of a creed upon the material routine of the days, the humdrum living through of life that brings to it its final color and form—these things shape us and guide us, make us what we are, and alas, the story and the stage may only mention them. It is all very fine to say that as the years of work and aspiration passed, Grant Adams's channel of life grew narrower. But what does that tell? Does it tell of the slow, daily sculpturing upon his character of the three big, emotional episodes of his life? To be a father in boyhood, a father ashamed, yet in duty bound to love and cherish his child; to face death in youth horribly and escape only when other men's courage save him; to react upon that experience in a great spiritual awakening that all but touched madness; and to face unspeakable pain and terror and possible death to justify one's fanatic consecration. Then day by day to renounce ambition, to feel no desire for those deeper things of the heart that gather about a home and the joys of a home; to be atrophied where others are quick and to be supersensitive and highstrung where others are dull; these are facts of Grant Adams's life, but the greater facts are hidden; for they pass under the slow and inexorably moving current of life. They are that part of the living through of life that may not be staged nor told.

But something of the living through is marked on the man. Here he stands toward the close of the century that bore him—a tall, spare, red-haired, flint-visaged, wire-knit man, prematurely middle-aging in late youth. Under his high white forehead are restless blue eyes—deep, clear, chal-

lenging, combative blue eyes, a big nose protrudes from under the eyes that marks a willful, uncompromising creature and a big strong mouth, not finely cut, but with thick, hard lips, often chapped, that cover large irregular teeth. The face is determined and dogged—almost brutal sometimes when at rest; but when a smile lights it, a charm and grace from another being illumines the solemn countenance and Grant Adams's heart is revealed. The face is Puritan—all Adams, dour New England Adams, and the smile Irish—from the joyous life of Mary Sands.

We may only see the face: here and there on it is the mark of the sculptor's tool: now and then a glare or a smile reveals what deep creases and gashes the winds of the passing years have made in the soul behind the mask. Here and there, as a rising strident voice in passionate exhortation lifts, we may hear the roar of the narrowing channel into which his life is rushed with augmented force as he hurries forward into his destiny. In that tumult, family, home, ambition, his very child itself that was his first deep well-spring of love, are slipping from him into the torrent. The flood washes about him; his one idea dominates him. He is restless under it—restless even with the employment of the hour. The unions, for which he has been working for more than half a decade, do not satisfy him. His aim is perfection and mortality irritates him, but does not discourage him. For even vanity is slipping from him in the erosion of the waters rushing down their narrowing groove.

But it is only his grim flint face we see; only his high strident, but often melodiously sympathetic voice we hear; only his wiry, lank body with its stump of a right arm that stands before us. The minutes—awful minutes some of them—the hours, painful wrestling hours, the days, doubt-ridden days, and the long monotonous story of the years, we may not know. For the living through of life still escapes us, and only life's tableau of the moment is before us.

Now whatever gloss of gayety Dr. Nesbit might put upon his opinion of Grant Adams and his work in the world, it was evident that the Doctor's opinion of that work was not high. But it was comparatively high; for Harvey's opinion of Grant

Adams and his work was abysmal in its depth. He was running his life on a different motor from the motor which moved Harvey; the town was moving after a centripetal force—every one was for himself, and the devil was entitled to the hindermost. Grant Adams was centrifugal; he was not considering himself particularly and was shamelessly taking heed of the hindermost which was the devil's by right. And so men said in their hearts, if this man wins, there will be the devil to pay. For Grant was going about the district spreading discontent. He was calling attention to the violation of the laws in the mines; he was calling attention to the need of other laws to further protect the miners and smelter men. He was going about from town to town in the Valley building up the unions and urging the men to demand more wages, either in actual money or in shorter hours, improved labor conditions, and cheaper rent and better houses from the company which housed the families of the workers.

"Why," he asked, "should labor bear the burden of industry and take its leavings?"

"Why," he demanded, "should capital toil not nor spin and be clothed as Solomon in his glory?"

"Why," he argued, "should the profits of toil be used to buy more tools for toil and not more comforts for toil?"

"Why, why—" he challenged Market Street, "is the partnership of society, not a partnership, but a conspiracy?"

Now Market Street had long been wrathful at that persistent Why.

But when it became known that John Dexter had invited Grant Adams to occupy the pulpit of the Congregational Church one Sunday evening to state his case, Market Street's wrath choked it. For several years John Dexter had been preaching sermons that made the choir the only possible theme of conversation between him and Ahab Wright. John Dexter had been crucified a thousand times by the sordid greed of man in Harvey, and had cried out in the wilderness of his pulpit against it; but his cries fell upon deaf ears, or in dumb hearts.

The invitation to Grant to speak at John Dexter's Sunday evening service was more of a challenge to Harvey than Harvey comprehended. But even if the town did not en-

tirely realize the seriousness of the challenge, at least the minister found himself summoned by Market Street to a meeting to discuss the wisdom of his invitation. Whereupon John Dexter accepted the invitation and, girding up his loins, went as a strong man rejoicing to run a race.

To what a judgment seat they summoned John Dexter! First, up spake Commerce. "Dr. Dexter," said Commerce —Commerce always referred to John Dexter as Doctor, though no Doctor was he and he knew it well, "Dr. Dexter, we feel that your encouragement—hum—uhm—well, your patronage of this man Adams, in his—well, shall we say incendiary—" a harsh word is incendiary, so Commerce stopped and touched its graying side whiskers reverently and patted its immaculate white necktie, and then went on: "—well perhaps indiscreet will do!" With Commerce indeed there is no vast difference between the indiscrete and the incendiary. "—indiscrete agitation against the—well —uhm—the way we have to conduct business, is—is regretable,—at least regretable!"

"Why?" interrupted John Dexter sharply, throwing Commerce sadly out of balance. But the Law, which is the palladium of our liberties, answered for Commerce in a slow snarling, "because he is preaching discontent."

"But Mr. Calvin," returned John Dexter quickly, "if any one would come to town preaching discontent to Wright & Perry, showing them how to make more money, to enlarge their profits, to rise among their fellow merchants—would you refuse to give him audience in a pulpit?" The Law did not deign to answer the preacher and then Industry took heart to say, pulling its military goatee vigorously, and clearing its dear old throat for a passage at arms: "'Y gory man, there's always been a working class and they've always had to work like sixty and get the worst of it, I guess, and they always will—what say? You can't improve on the way the world is made. And when she's made, she's made—what say? I tell you now, you're wasting your time on that class of people."

The antagonists looked into each other's kindly eyes. Industry triumphing in its logic, the minister hunting in his heart for the soft answer that would refute the logic with-

out hurting its author. "Captain," he said, "there was once a wiser than we who went about preaching a new order, spreading discontent with injustice, whose very mother was of the lowest industrial class."

"Yes—and you know what happened to Him," sneered the Courts, which are the keystones of government in the structure of civilization. "And," continued the courts, in a grand and superior voice, "you can't drag business into religion, sir. Religion is one thing and I respect it,"—titters from the listening angels, "—and business is another thing, and we think, sir, that you are trying to mix the insoluble, and as business men who have our own deep religious convictions—" inaudible guffaws from the angels, "—we feel the sacrilege of asking this blatherskite Adams to speak on any subject in so sacred a place as our consecrated pulpit, sir." Hoarse hoots from the angels.

No soft benignity beamed in the preacher's face as he turned to the Courts. "My pulpit, Judge," answered John Dexter sternly, "first of all stands for the gospel of Justice between man and man. It will afford sanctuary for the thief and the Magdalene, but only the penitent thief and the weeping Magdalene!" And John Dexter brought down a resounding fist on the table before him. "I believe that the first duty of religion is to preach shame on the wicked, that they may quit their wickedness, and if," John Dexter's voice rose as he went on, "in the light of our widening intelligence we see that employers are organized wickedly to rob their workers of justice in one way or another, I stand with those who would make the thief disgorge for his own soul's sake, incidentally, but chiefly that justice may come into an evil world and men may not mock the mercy and goodness of God by pointing at the evil men do unrebuked in His name, and under His servants' noses. My pulpit is a free pulpit, sir. When it is not that, I shall leave it. And even though I do not agree sometimes with a man's message, so long as my pulpit is free, any man who desires to cry stop thief, in the darkness of this world, may lift his voice there, and no man shall say him nay! Have you gentlemen anything further to offer?"

Commerce ceased rubbing its hands. Its alter ego, Busi-

ness, was obviously getting ready to say something, but was only whistling for the station, and the crowd knew it would be a minute before his stuttering speech should arrive. Patriotism was leaning forward with its hands back of its ears, smiling pleasantly at what he did not understand, and Industry, who saw the strings in which his world was wrapped up for delivery, cut, and the world sprawled in confusion before him by the preacher's defiance, was pulling his military goatee solemnly when Science toddled in, white-clad, pink-faced, smoking his short pipe and clicking his cane rather more snappily than usual. He saw that he had punctuated an embarrassed situation. Only Religion and Patriotism were smiling. Science brought his cane down with a whack and piped out:

"So you are going to muzzle John Dexter, are you—you witch-burning old pharisees. I heard of your meeting, and I just thought I'd come around to the bonfire! What are you trying to do here, anyway?"

At last Business which had been whistling for the station was ready to pull in; so it unloaded itself thus: "We are p-protesting, Doc, at th-th-th-th m-m-m-man Adams—this l-l-labor sk-sk-skate and s-s-socialist occupying J-J-John Dexter's p-pulp-p-pit!"

Science looked at Business a grave moment, then burst out, "What are you all afraid of! Here you are, a lot of grown men with fat bank accounts sitting around in a blue funk because Grant Adams does a little more or less objectionable talking. I don't agree with Grant much more than you do. But you're a lot of old hens, cackling around here because Grant Adams invades the roost to air his views. Let him talk. Let 'em all talk. Talk is cheap; otherwise we wouldn't have free speech." He grinned cynically as he asked, "Haven't you any faith in the Constitution of the fathers? They were smart enough to know that free speech was a safety valve; let 'em blow off. Then go down and organize and vote 'em afterwards according to the dictates of your own conscience. Politics is the antidote for free speech!" The Doctor glared at the Courts, smiled amiably at Business and winked conspicuously at Religion. Religion blushed at the blasphemy and as there seemed to be nothing

further before the house the Doctor and John Dexter left the room.

But the honest indignation of Market Street that an agitator should appear in a pulpit—that an agitator for anything, should appear in any pulpit—waxed strong. For it was assumed that religion had nothing to do with social conduct; religion was solely a matter of individual salvation. Religion was a matter concerned entirely with getting to heaven oneself, and not at all a matter of getting others to heaven except as they took the narrow and individual path. The idea that environment affects character and that society through politics and social and economic institutions may change a man's environments and thus affect the characters and the chances for Heaven of whole sections of the population, was an idea which had not been absorbed by Market Street in Harvey. So Market Street raged.

That evening when Grant Adams returned from work he received two significant notes. One was from John Dexter and ran:

"Dear Grant: Fearing that you may hear of the comment my invitation to you to speak in my pulpit is causing and fearing that you may either decide at the last minute not to come or that you will modify your remarks out of consideration for me, I write to say that while of course I may not agree with everything you advocate, yet my pulpit is a free pulpit and I cannot consent that you restrict its freedom in saying your full say as a man, any more than I could consent to have my own freedom restricted. Yours in the faith—J. D."

The other note ran: "Father says to tell you to tone it down. I have delivered his message. I say here is your chance to get the truth where it is most needed, and even if for the most part it falls on stony ground—you still must sow it.—L. N. VD."

Sunday evening saw a large congregation in the pews of the Rev. John Dexter's church. In the front and middle portion of the church were the dwellers on the Hill, those whose lines fell in pleasant places. They were the "Haves" of the town,—conspicuous and highly respectable with rustle of silks and flutter of ribbons.

And back of these sat a score of men and women from South Harvey, the "Have-nots," the dwellers in the dreary valley. There was Denny Hogan, late of the mines, but now of the smelter—with his curly hair plastered over his forehead, and with his wife, she that was Violet Mauling holding a two-year-old baby with sweaty, curly red hair to her breast asleep; there was Ira Dooley, also late of the mines, but now proprietor of a little game of chance over the Hot Dog Saloon; there was Pat McCann, a pit boss and proud of it, with Mrs. McCann—looking her eyes out at Mrs. Nesbit's hat. There was John Jones, in his Sunday best, and Evan Hughes and Tom Williams, the wiry little Welsh miners who had faced death with Grant Adams five years before. They were with him that night at the church with all the pride in him that they could have if he were one of the real nobility, instead of a labor agitator with a little more than local reputation. And there were Dick and his boy Mugs and the silent Mrs. Bowman and Bennie her youngest and Mary the next to the youngest. And Mrs. Bowman in the South Harvey colony was a person of consequence, for she nodded to the Nesbits and the Mortons and to Laura and to Mrs. Calvin and to all the old settlers of Harvey—rather conspicuously. She had the gratification of noting that South Harvey saw the nobility nod back. With the South Harvey people came Amos Adams in his rough gray clothes and rough gray beard. Jasper Adams, in the highest possible collar, and in the gayest possible shell-pink necktie and under the extremest clothes that it might be possible for the superintendent of a Sunday School to wear, shared a hymnal, when the congregation rose to sing, with the youngest Miss Morton. There were those who thought the singing was merely a duet between young Mr. Adams and the youngest Miss Morton—so much feeling did they put into the music. Mr. Brotherton was so impressed, that he marked young Adams for a tryout at the next funeral where there was a bass voice needed, making the mental reservation that no one needed to look at the pimples of a boy who could sing like that.

When the congregation sat down after the first hymn John Dexter formally presented Grant Adams to the congregation. The young man rose, walked to the chancel rail and stood for

a moment facing his audience without speaking. The congregation saw a tall, strong featured, uncouth man with large nose and a big mouth—clearly masculine and not finely chiselled. In these features there was something almost coarse and earthy; but in the man's eyes and forehead, there lurked the haunting, fleeting shadow of the eternal feminine in his soul. His eyes were deep and blue and tender, and in repose always seemed about to smile, while his forehead, high and broad, topped by a shock of red hair, gave him a kind of intellectual charity that made his whole countenance shine with kindness. Yet his clothes belied the promise of his brow. They were ill-fitting, with an air of Sunday-best-ness that gave him an incongruous scarecrow effect. It was easy to see why Market Street was beginning to call him that "Mad Adams." As he lifted his glance from the floor, his eyes met Laura Van Dorn's, then flitted away quickly, and the smile she should have had for her own, he gave to his audience. He began speaking with his arms behind him to hide the crippled arm which was tipped with a gloved iron claw. His voice was low and gentle, yet his hearers felt its strength in reserve.

"I suppose," he began slowly, "every man has his job in the world, and I presume my job seems rather an unnecessary one to some of my friends, and I can hardly blame them. For the assumption of superiority that it may seem to require upon the whole must be distasteful to them. For as a professional apostle of discontent, urging men to cease the worship of things as they are, I am taking on myself a grave burden—that of leading those who come with me, into something better. In the end perhaps, you will not be proud of me. For my vision may be a delusion. Time may leave me naked to the cold truth of life, and I may awaken from my dreaming to reality. That is possible. But now I see my course; now I feel the deep call of a duty I cannot resist." He was speaking softly and in hardly more than a conversational tone, with his hand at his side and his gloved claw behind him. He lifted his hand and spoke in a deeper tone.

"I have come to you—to those of you who lead sheltered lives of comfort, amid work and scenes you love, to tell you

of your neighbors; to call to you in their name, and in the name of our common God for help. I have come from the poor—to tell you of their sorrows, to beg of you to come over into Macedonia and help us; for without you we are helpless. True—God knows how true—the poor outnumber you by ten to one. True, they have the power within them to rise, but their strength is as water in their hands. They need you. They need your neighborly love."

As he spoke something within him, some power of his voice or of his presence played across the congregation like a wind. The wind which at first touched a few who bent forward to hear him, was moving every one. Faces gradually set in attention. He went on:

"How wonderful is this spirit of life that has come rolling in through the eons, rolling in from some vast illimitable sea of life that we call God. For ages and ages on this planet life could only give to new life the power to feed and propagate, could only pass on to new life the heritage of instinct; then another impulse of the outer sea washed in and there came a day when life could imitate, could learn a little, could pass on to new life some slight power of growth. And then came welling in from the unknown bourne another wave, and lo! life could reason, and God heard men whisper, Father, and deep called unto deep. Since then through the long centuries, through the gray ages, life slowly has been rising, slowly coming in from the hidden sea that laves the world. Millions and millions of men are doomed to know nothing of this life that gives us joy; millions are held bound in a social inheritance that keeps them struggling for food, over outworn paths, mere creatures of primal instinct, whose Godhood is taken from them at birth; by you—by you who get what you do not earn from those who earn what they do not get."

He turned to the group near the rear of the room, looked at them and continued:

"The poor need your neighborly sacrifice, and in that neighborly love and sacrifice you will grow in stature more than they. What you give you will keep; what you lose you will gain. The brotherhood you build up will bless and comfort you.

"The poor," he exclaimed passionately, "need you, but how, before God you need them! For only a loving understanding of your neighbors' lives will soften your calloused hearts. Long benumbing hours of grimy work, sordid homes amid daily and hourly scenes of filth and shame!" He leaned forward and cried: "Listen to me, Ahab Wright," and he thrust forward his iron claw toward the merchant while the congregation gasped, "what if you had to strip naked and bathe in a one-roomed hut before your family every night when you came home, dirty and coal-stained from your day's work! the beggar and the harlot and the thief nearby." He moved his accusing claw and the startled eyes of the crowd followed it as it pointed to Daniel Sands and Grant exclaimed: "Listen, Uncle Dan Sands, how would you like to have your daughter see the things the children see who live in your tenements next to the Burned District, which is your property also! Poisoned food, cheap, poisoned air, cheap, poisoned thoughts—all food and air and ideas, the cast-off refuse of your daily lives who live in these sheltered homes. You have a splendid sewer system up here; but it flows into South Harvey and the Valley towns, a great open ravine, because you people sitting here who own the property down there won't tax yourselves to enclose those sewers that poison us!" A faint—rather dazed smile ran over the congregation like a wraith of smoke. He felt that the smoke proved that he had struck fire. He went on: "Love, great aspiring love of fathers and mothers and sisters and brothers, love stifled by fell circumstance, by cruel events, and love that winces in agony at seeing children and father and brother go down in the muck all around them—that is the heritage of poverty.

"Hear me, Kyle Perry and John Kollander. I know you think poverty is the social punishment of the unfit. But I tell you poverty is not the punishment of the weak. Poverty is a social condition to which millions are doomed and from which only hundreds escape when the doom of birth is sealed. What has Ahab Wright given to Harvey more than James McPherson, who discovered coal here? What has Daniel Sands done for Harvey more than Tom Williams, who has spent his life at hard work mining coal? Is

not his coal as valuable as Uncle Daniel's interest? Friends —think of these things!"

The wraith of smoke that had appeared when Grant first began speaking personally to the men of Harvey, in a minute had grown to a surer evidence of fire. The smiling ceased. Angry looks began flashing over the faces before Grant, like darts of flame. And after these looks came a great black cloud of wrath that was as perceptible as a gust of smoke. He felt that soon the fire would burst forth. But he hurried on with his message: "Poverty is not the social punishment of the weak, I repeat it. Poverty is a social inheritance of the many, a condition which holds men hard and fast—a condition that you may change, you who have so much. All this coal and oil and mineral have profited you greatly, oh, men of Harvey. You are rich, Daniel Sands. You are prosperous, Ahab Wright. You have every comfort around you and yours, John Kollander, and you, Joseph Calvin, are rearing your children in luxury compared with Dick Bowman's children. Hasn't he worked as hard as you? Here are Ira Dooley and Denny Hogan. They started as equals with you up here and have worked as hard and have lived average lives. Yet if their share is a fair share of the earnings of this community, you have an unfair share. How did you get it?" He leaned out over the chancel rail, pointed a bony, accusing finger at the congregation and glared at the eyes before him angrily. Quickly he recovered his poise but brought his steel claw down on the pulpit beside him with a sharp clash as he cried again, "How did you get it?"

Then it was that the flame of indignation burst forth. It came first in a hiss and another and a third—then a crackling fire of hisses greeted his last sentence. When the hissing calmed, his voice rose slightly. He went on:

"We of the middle classes—we have risen above the great mass below us: we are permitted to learn—a little—to imitate and expand somewhat. But above us, thank God, is another group in the social organization. Here at the top stand the blessed, privileged few who are the world's prophets and dreamers and seers—they know God; they drink deep of the rising tide of everlasting life that is booming in, flooding the

world with mercy and love and brotherhood; and what they see in one century—and die for disclosing—we all see in the next century and fight to hold it fast!" He stood looking at the floor, then opened wide his glaring eyes, a fanatic's mania blazing in them, lifted his arms and cried with a great voice like a trumpet: "You—you—you who have known God's mercy and his goodness and his love—why, in the dead Christ's name do you sit here and let the flood of life be dammed away from your brothers, stealing the waters of life like thieves from your brethren by your cruel laws and customs and the chains of social circumstance!"

They tried to hiss again but he hurried on as one possessed of a demon: "A little love, a little sacrifice, a little practical brotherly care from each of you each day would help. We don't want your alms, we want justice. Thousands of babies—loved just as yours are loved—are slaughtered every month through poisoned food that comes from commercial greed. Thousands of fathers and brothers over this land are killed every year because it is cheaper to kill them than to protect them by machinery guarded and watched. Their blood is upon you—for by your laws, by your middle class courts you could stop its flowing. Thousands of mothers die every week from poor housing—you could stop that if you would. They are stopping it by laws in other lands. Millions of girls the world over are led like sheep to shameful lives because of industrial conditions that your vote and voice could change; and yet," his voice lost its accusing tone and he spoke gently, even tenderly, "as babies they cuddled in their mothers' arms and roused all the hope and inspired all the love that a soft little body may bring. Millions and millions of mothers who clasp their children to them in hope, must see those children go into life to be broken and crushed by the weight from above."

As Grant was speaking he noticed that Morty Sands was nodding his head off in gorgeous approval. Then without thinking how his words might cut, he cried, "And look at our good friend Morty Sands who enjoys every luxury and is arrayed as the lilies of the field! What does Morty give to society that he can promise the girl who marries him, comfort and ease and all the happiness that physical affluence

may bring? And then there sits Mugs Bowman. What can Mugs offer his girl except a life of hard, grinding work, a houseful of children and a death perhaps of slow disease? Yet Mugs must have his houseful of children for they must all work to support Morty. Where is the justice in a society organized like this?

"For Christ's living sake," cried the man as his face glowed in his emotion, "let life wash in from its holy source to these our brothers. Shame on you—you greedy ones, you dollar worshipers—you dam the stream, you muddy the waters, you poison the well of life—shame—shame!" he cried and then paused, gloated perhaps in his pause, for the storm he saw gathering in the crowd, to break. His face was transfigured by the passion in his heart and seemed illumined with wrath.

"The flag—the flag!" bawled deaf John Kollander, rising, "He is desecrating Old Glory!"

Then fire met fire and the conflagration was past control. It raged over the church noisily.

"Look-a here, young man," called Joseph Calvin, standing in his seat.

"The flag—will no one defend the flag!" bellowed John Kollander, while Rhoda, his wife, looked on with amiable approval.

"P-put him out," stuttered Kyle Perry, and his clerks and understrappers joined the clamor.

"Well, say, men," cried George Brotherton in the confusion of hissing and groaning, "can't you let the man talk? Is free speech dead in this town?" His great voice silenced the crowd, and John Dexter was in the pulpit holding out his hands. As he spoke the congregation grew silent, and they heard him say:

"This is a free pulpit; this man shall not be disturbed." But Joseph Calvin stamped noisily out of the church. John Kollander and his wife marched out behind him with military tread and Kyle Perry and Ahab Wright with their families followed, amid a shuffling of feet and a clamor of voices. The men from South Harvey kept their places. There was a whispering among them and Grant, fearing that they would start trouble, called to them sternly:

"My friends must respect this house. Let property riot —poverty can wait. It has waited a long time and is used to it."

When Market Street was gone, the speaker drew a deep breath and said in a low, quiet voice charged with pent-up emotion: "Now that we are alone, friends,—now that they are gone whose hearts needed this message, let me say just this: God has given you who live beautiful lives the keeping of his treasure. Let us ask ourselves this: Shall we keep it to share it with our brethren in love, or shall we guard it against our brethren in hate?"

He walked back to the rear of the room and sat, with his head bowed down, beside his friends, spent and weary while the services closed.

At the church door Laura Van Dorn saw the despair that was somewhat a physical reaction from weariness. So she cut her way through the group and went to him, taking his arm and drawing him aside into the home-bound walk, as quickly as she could. He remained grim and spoke only in answer to challenge or question from Laura. It was plain to her that he felt that his speech was a failure; that he had not made himself understood; that he had overstated his case. She was not sure herself that he had not lost more ground than he had gained in the town. But she wrapped him about in a garment of kindness—an almost maternal tenderness that was balm to his heart. She did not praise his speech but she let him know that she was proud of him, that her heart was in all that he had said, even if he felt definitely that there were places in his adventure where her head was not ready to go. She held no check upon the words that came to her lips, for she felt, even deeper and surer than she felt her own remoteness from the love which her girlhood had known, that in him it was forever dead. No touch of his hand; no look of his eye, no quality of his voice had come to her since her childhood, in which she could find trace or suggestion that sex was alive in him. The ardor that burned so wildly upon his face, the fire in his eyes that glowed when he spoke of his work and his problems, seemed to have charred within him all flower and beauty of romance. But they left with him a hunger for sympathy. A

desire to be mothered and a longing for a deep and sweet understanding which made Laura more and more necessary to him as he went into his life's pilgrimage. As they reached a corner, he left her with her family while he turned away for a night walk.

As he walked, he was continually coming upon lovers passing or meeting him in the night; and Grant seeing them felt his sense of isolation from life renewed, but was not stirred to change his course. For hours he wandered through the town and out of it into the prairies, with his heart heavy and wroth at the iniquities of men which make the inequities of life. For his demon kept him from sleep. If another demon, and perhaps a gentler, tried to whisper to him that night of another life and a sweeter, tried to turn him from his course into the normal walks of man, tried to break his purpose and tempt him to dwell in the comely tents of Kedar—if some gentler angels that would have saved him from a harsher fate had beckoned to him and called him that night, through passing lovers' arms and the murmur of loving voices, his eyes were blind and his ears were deaf and his heart was hot with another passion.

Amos Adams was in bed when Grant came into the house. On the table was a litter of writing paper. Grant sat down for a minute under the lamp. His father in the next room stirred, and asked:

"What kept you?" And then, "I had a terrific time with Mr. Left to-night." The father appeared in the doorway. "But just look there what I got after a long session."

On the page were these words written in a little round, old-fashioned hand, some one's interminably repeated prayer. "Angels guide him—angels strengthen him; angels pray for him." These words were penned clear across the page and on the next line and the next and the next to the very bottom of the page, in a weary monotony, save that at the bottom of the sheet the pen had literally run into the paper, so heavily was the hand of the writer bearing down! Under that, written in the fine hand used by Mr. Left was this:

"Huxley:—On earth I wrote that I saw one angel—'the strong, calm angel playing for love.' Now I see the forces of good leading the world forward, compelling progress; all

are personal—just as the Great All Encompassing Force is personal, just as human consciousness is personal. The positive forces of life are angels—not exact—but the best figure. So it is true that was written, 'there is more joy in Heaven' —and 'the angels sang for joy.' This also is only a figure—but the best I can get through to you. Angels guide us, angels strengthen us, angels pray for us."

CHAPTER XXXI

IN WHICH JUDGE VAN DORN MAKES HIS BRAGS AND DR. NESBIT SEES A VISION

IT was the last day of the last year of the Nineteenth Century—and a fair, beautiful day it was. The sun shone over Harvey in spite of the clouds from the smelter in South Harvey, and in spite of the clouds that were blown by the soft, south wind up the Wahoo Valley from other smelters and other coal mines, and a score of great smoke stacks in Foley and Magnus and Plain Valley, where the discovery of coal and oil and gas, within the decade that was passing, had turned the Valley into a straggling town almost twenty miles long. So high and busy were the chimneys that when the south wind blew toward the capital of this industrial community, often the sun was dimmed in Harvey by a haze. But on this fair winter's day the air was dry and cold and even in Harvey shadows were black and clear, and the sun's warmth had set the redbirds to singing in the brush and put so much joy into the world that Judge Thomas Van Dorn had ventured out with his new automobile—a chugging, clattering wonder that set all the horses of Greeley County on their hind feet, making him a person of distinction in the town far beyond his renown as a judge and an orator and a person of more than state-wide reputation. But the Judge's automobile was frail and prone to err—being not altogether unlike its owner in that regard. Thus many a time when it chugged out of his barn so proudly, it came limping back behind a span of mules. And so it happened on that bright, beautiful, December day that the Judge was sitting upon a box in Captain Morton's shop, while the Captain at his little forge was welding some bits of metal together and discoursing upon the virtues of his Household

Horse, which he was assembling in small quantities—having arranged with a firm in South Chicago to cast the two iron pieces that were needed.

"Now, for instance, on a clothes wringer," the Captain was saying: "It's a perfect wonder on a clothes wringer: I have the agency of a clothes wringer that is making agents rich all over the country. But women don't like clothes wringers; why? Because they require such hard work. All right—hitch on my Household Horse, and the power required is reduced three-fifths and a day's wash may be put on the line as easy as a girl could play The Maiden's Prayer on a piano—eh? Or, say, put it on a churn—same Horse—one's all that's needed to a house. Or make it an ice cream freezer or a cradle or a sewing machine, or anything on earth that runs by a crank—and 'y gory, man, you make housework a joy. I sold Laura one—traded her one for lessons for Ruth, and she says wash-day at the Doctor's is like Sunday now—what say? Lila's so crazy about it they can't keep her out of the basement while the woman works,—likes to dabble in the water you know like all children, washing her doll clothes, what say?"

But the Judge said nothing. The Captain tinkered with the metal, and dipped it slowly in and out of a tub of dirty water to temper it, and as he tried it in the groove where it belonged upon the automobile backed up to the shop, he found that it was not exactly true, and went to work to spring it back into line. The Judge looked around the shop—a barny, little place filled with all sorts of wheels and pulleys and levers and half-finished inventions that wouldn't work, and that, even if they would work, would be of little consequence. There was an attempt to make a self-oiler for buggy wheels, a half-finished contrivance that was supposed to keep cordwood stacked in neat rows; an automatic contraption to prevent coffeepots from burning; a cornsheller that would all but work; a molasses faucet with an alcohol burner which was supposed to make the sirup flow faster—but which instead sometimes blew up and burned down grocery stores, and there were steamers and churns and household contrivances which the Captain had introduced into the homes of Harvey in past years, not of his invention,

to be sure, but contrivances that had inspired his eloquence, and were mute witnesses to his prowess—trophies of the chase. Above the forge were rows of his patent sprockets, all neatly wrapped in brown paper, and under this row of merchandise was a clipping from the *Times* describing the Captain's invention, and predicting—at five cents a line—that it would revolutionize the theory of mechanics and soon become a household need all over the world.

As the Judge looked idly at the Captain's treasures while the Captain tinkered with the steel, he took off his hat, and the Captain, peering through his glasses, remarked:

"Getting kind of thin on top, Tom—eh? Doc, he's leaning a little hard on his cane. Joe Calvin, he's getting rheumatic, and you're getting thin-haired. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away."

"So you believe the Lord runs things here in Harvey, do you, Cap?" asked the Judge, who was playing with a bit of wire.

"Well—I suppose if you come right down to it," answered the Captain, "a man's got to have the consolation of religion in some shape or other or he's going to get mighty discouraged—what say?"

"Why," scoffed the Judge, "it's a myth—there's nothing to it. Look at my wife—I mean Margaret—she changes religion as often as she changes dogs. Since we've been married she's had three religions. And what good does it do her?"

The Captain, sighting down the edge of the metal, shook his head, and the Judge went on: "What good does any religion do? I've broken the ten commandments, every one of them—and I get on. No one bothers me, because I keep inside the general statutes. I've beat God at his own game. I tell you, Cap, you can do what you please just so you obey the state and federal laws and pay your debts. This God-myth amuses me."

Captain Morton did not care to argue with the Judge. So he said, by way of making conversation for a customer, and neighbor and guest:

"I hear, well, to be exact, George Brotherton was telling me and the girls the other night that the Company is secretly

dropping out the members of the unions that Grant Adams has been organizing down in South Harvey."

"Yes—that Adams is another one of your canting, God-and-morality fellows. Always watch that kind. I tell you, Captain," barked the Judge, "about the only thing my wife and I have agreed on for a year is that this Adams fellow is a sneaking, pharisaical hound. Lord, how she hates him! Sometimes I think women hate hard enough to compete with your God, who according to the preachers, is always slipping around getting even with fellows for their sins. God and women are very much alike, anyway," sneered the Judge. In the silence that followed, both men were attracted by a noise behind them—the rustling of straw. They looked around and saw the figure of a little girl—a yellow-haired, blue-eyed, shy, little girl, trying to slip out of the place. She had evidently been in the loft gathering eggs, for her apron was full, and she had her foot on the loft ladder.

"Why, Lila, child," exclaimed the Captain, "I clean forgot you being up there—did you find any eggs? Why didn't you come down long ago?"

"Come here, Lila," called the Judge. The child stood by the ladder hesitatingly, holding her little apron corners tightly in her teeth basketing the eggs—too embarrassed now that she was down the ladder, to use her hands.

"Lila," coaxed the Judge, reaching his hand into his pocket, "won't you let Papa give you a dollar for candy or something. Come on, daughter." He put out his hands. She shook her head. She had to pass him to get to the door. "You aren't afraid of your Papa are you, Lila—come—here's a dollar for you—that's a good girl."

Her mouth quivered. Big tears were dropping down her cheeks. The Captain's quick eye saw that something had hurt her. He went over to her, put his arm about her, took the eggs from her apron, fondled her gently without speaking. The Judge drew nearer "Lila—come—that's a good girl—here, take the money. Oh Lila, Lila," he cried, "won't you take it for Papa—won't you, my little girl?"

The child looked up at him with shy frightened eyes, and suddenly she put down her head and ran past him. He tried

to hold her—to put the silver into her hand, but she shrank away and dropped the coin before him.

"Shy child, Judge—very shy. Emma let her gather the eggs this morning, she loves to hunt eggs," chuckled the Captain, "and she went to the loft just before you came in. I clean forgot she hadn't come down."

The Captain went on with his work.

"I suppose, Cap," said Van Dorn quietly, "she heard more or less of what I said." The Captain nodded.

"How much did she understand?" the Judge asked.

"More'n you'd think, Judge—more'n you'd think. But," added Captain Morton after a pause, "I know the little skite like a top, Judge—and there's one thing about her: She's a loyal little body. She'll never tell; you needn't be worrying about that."

The Judge sighed and added sadly: "It wasn't that, Cap—it was—" But the Judge left his sentence in the air. The mending was done. The Judge paid the old man and gave him a dollar more than he asked, and went chugging off in a cloud of smoke, while the Captain, thinking over what the Judge had said, sighed, shook his head, and bending over his work, cackled in an undertone, snatches of a tune that told of a land that is fairer than day. He had put together three sprockets and was working on the fourth when he looked up and saw his daughter Emma sitting on the box that the Judge had vacated. The Captain put his hand to his back and stood up, looking at his eldest daughter with loving pride.

"Emma," he said at length, "Judge Tom says women are like God." He stood near her and smoothed her hair, and patted her cheek as he pressed her head against his side. "I guess he's right—eh? Lila was in the loft getting eggs and she overheard a lot of his fool talk." The daughter made no reply. The Captain worked on and finally said: "It kind of hit Tom hard to have Lila hear him; took the tuck out of him, eh?"

Emma still waited. "My dear, the more I know of women the better I think of God, and the surer I am of God, the better I think of women—what say?" He sat on the box beside her and took her hand in his hard, cracked, grimy hand, "'Y gory, girl, I tell you, give me a line on a man's idea

of God and I can tell you to a tee what he thinks of women —eh?" The Captain dropped the hand for a moment and looked out of the door into the alley.

"Well, Father, I agree with you in general about women but in particular I don't care about Mrs. Herdicker and I wish Martha had another job, though I suppose it's better than teaching school." The daughter sighed. "Honest, father, sometimes when I've been on my feet all day, and the children have been mean, and the janitor sticks his head in and grins, so I'll know the superintendent is in the building and get the work off the board that the rules don't allow me to put on, or one of the other girls sends a note up to watch for my spelling for he's cranky on spelling to-day, I just think, 'Lordee, if I had a job in some one's kitchen, I'd be too happy to breathe.' But then—"

"Yes—yes, child—I know it's hard work now—but 'y gory, Emmy, when I get this sprocket introduced and going, I'll buy you six superintendents in a brass cage and let you feed 'em biled eggs to make 'em sing—eh?" He smiled and patted his daughter's hair and rose to go back to work. The girl plucked at his coat and said: "Now sit down, father, I want to talk to you," she hesitated. "It's about Mr. Brotherton. You know he's been coming out here for years and I thought he was coming to see me, and now Martha thinks he comes to see her, and Martha always stays there and so does Ruth, and if he is coming to see me—" she stopped. Her father looked at her in astonishment. "Why, father," she went on,—"why not? I'm twenty-five, and Martha's twenty-two and even Ruth is seventeen—he might even be coming to see Ruth," she added bitterly.

"Yes, or Epaminondas—the cat—eh?" cut in the old man. Then he added, indignantly, "Well, how about this singing Jasper Adams—who's he coming to see? Or Amos—he comes around here sometimes Saturday night after G. A. R. meeting, with me—what say? Would you want us all to clear out and leave you the front room with him?" demanded the perturbed Captain.

Then the father put his arm about his child tenderly: "Twenty-five years old—twenty-five years—why, girl, in my time a girl was an old maid laid on the shelf at twenty-five—

and here you are," he mused, "just thinking of your first beau and here I am needing your mother worse than I ever did in my life. Law-see' girl—how do I know what to do—what say?" But he did know enough to draw her to him and kiss her and sigh. "Well—maybe I can do something—maybe—we'll see." And then she left him and he went to his work. And as he worked the thought struck him suddenly that if he could put one of his sprockets in the Judge's automobile where he had seen a chain, that it would save power and stop much of the noise. So as he worked he dreamed that his sprocket was adopted by the makers of the new machines, and that he was rich—exceedingly rich and that he took the girls to visit the Ohio kin, and that Emma had her trip to the Grand Canyon, that Martha went to Europe and that Ruthie "took vocal" of a teacher in France whose name he could not pronounce.

As he hammered away at his bench he heard a shuffling at the door and looking up saw Dr. Nesbit in the threshold.

"Come in, Doctor; sit down and talk," shrilled the Doctor before the Captain could speak, and when the Doctor had seated himself upon the box by the workbench, the Captain managed to say: "Surely—come right in, I'm kind of lonesome anyhow."

"And I'm mad," cried the Doctor. "Just let me sit here and blow off a little to my old army friend."

"Well—well, Doctor, it's queer to see you hot under the collar—eh?" The Doctor began digging out his pipe and filling it, without speaking. The Captain asked: "What's gone wrong? Politics ain't biling? what say?"

"Well," returned the Doctor, "you know Laura works at her kindergarten down there in South Harvey, and she got me to pass that hours-of-service law for the smelter men at the extra session last summer. Good law! Those men working there in the fumes shouldn't work over six hours a day—it will kill them. I managed by trading off my hide and my chances of Heaven to get a law through, cutting them down to eight hours in smelter work. Denny Hogan, who works on the slag dump, is going to die if he has to do it another year on a ten-hour shift. He's been up and down for two years now—the Hogans live neighbors to Laura's school and I've

been watching him. Well," and here the Doctor thumped on the floor with his cane, "this Judge—this vain, strutting peacock of a Judge, this cat-chasing Judge that was once my son-in-law, has gone and knocked the law galley west so far as it affects the slag dump. I've just been reading his decision, and I'm hot—good and hot."

The Captain interrupted:

"I saw Violet Hogan and the children—dressed like princesses, walking out to-day—past the Judge's house—showing it to them—what say? My, how old she looks, Doctor!"

"Well—the damned villain—the infernal scoundrel—" piped the Doctor. "I just been reading that decision. The men showed in their lawsuit that the month before the law took effect the company, knowing the law had been passed, went out and sold their switch and sold the slag dump, to a fake railroad company that bought a switch engine and two or three cars, and incorporated as a railroad, and then—the same people owning the smelter and the railroad, they set all the men in the smelter that they could working on the slag dump, so the men were working for the railroad and not for the smelter company and didn't come within the eight hour law. And now the Judge stands by that farce; he says that the men working there under the very chimney of the smelter on the slag dump where the fumes are worst, are not subject to the law because the law says that men working for the smelters shall not work more than eight hours, and these men are working for a cheating, swindling subterfuge of a railroad. That's judge-made law. That's the kind of law that makes anarchists. Law!" snorted the Doctor, "Law!—made by judges who have graduated out of the employ of corporations—law!—is just what the Judge on the bench dares to read into the statute. I tell you, Cap, if the doctors and engineers and preachers were as subservient to greed and big money as the lawyers are, we would soon lose our standing. But when a lawyer commits some flagrant malpractice like that of Tom Van Dorn's—the lawyers remind us that the courts are sacred institutions."

The Doctor's pipe was out and in filling it again, he jabbed viciously at the bowl with his knife, and in the meantime the Captain was saying:

"Well, I suppose he found the body of the decisions leaning that way, Doc—you know Judges are bound by the body of the law."

"The body of the law—yes, damn 'em, I've bought 'em to find the body of the law myself."

The Doctor sputtered along with his pipe and cried out in his high treble—"I never had any more trouble buying a court than a Senator. And lawyers have no shame about hiring themselves to crooks and notorious lawbreakers. And some lawyers hire themselves body and soul to great corporations for life and we all know that those corporations are merely evading the laws and not obeying them; and lawyers—at the very top of the profession—brazenly hire out for life to that kind of business. What if the top of the medical profession was composed of men who devoted themselves to fighting the public welfare for life! We have that kind of doctors—but we call them quacks. We don't allow 'em in our medical societies. We punish them by ostracism. But the quack lawyers who devote themselves to skinning the public—they are at the head of the bar. They are made judges. They are promoted to supreme courts. A damn nice howdy-do we're coming to when the quacks run a whole profession. And Tom Van Dorn is a quack—a hair-splitting, owl-eyed, venal quack—who doles out the bread pills of injustice, and the strychnine stimulants of injustice and the deadening laudanum of injustice, and falls back on the body of the decisions to uphold him in his quackery. Justice demands that he take that fake corporation, made solely to evade the law, and shake its guts out and tell the men who put up this job, that he'll put them all in jail for contempt of court if they try any such shenanigan in his jurisdiction again. That would be justice. This—this decision—is humbug and every one knows it. What's more—it may be murder. For men can't work on that slag dump ten hours a day without losing their lives."

The captain tapped away at his sprocket. He had his own ideas about the sanctity of the courts. They were not to be overthrown so easily. The Doctor snorted: "Burn their bodies, and blear their minds, and then wail about our vicious lower classes—I'm getting to be an anarchist."

He prodded his cane among the débris on the floor and then he began to twitch the loose skin of his lower face and smiled. "Thank you, Cap," he chirped. "How good and beautiful a thing it is to blow off steam in a barn to your old army friend."

The Captain looked around and smiled and the Doctor asked: "What was that you were saying about Violet Hogan?"

"I said I saw her to-day and she looked faded and old—she's not so much older than my Emma—eh?"

"Still," said the Doctor, "Violet's had a tough time—a mighty tough time; three children in six years. The last one took most of her teeth; young horse doctor gave her some dope that about killed her; she's done all the cooking, washing, scrubbing and made garden for the family in that time—up every morning at five, seven days in the week to get breakfast for Dennis—Emma would look broken if she'd had that." The Doctor paused. "Like her mother—weak—vain—puts all of Denny's wages on the children's backs—Laura says Violet spends more on frills for those kids than we spend for groceries—and Violet goes around herself looking like the Devil before breakfast." The Doctor rested his chin on his cane. "Remember her mother—Mrs. Mauling—funny how it breeds that way. The human critter, Cap, is a curious beast—but he does breed true—mostly." The Doctor loafed, whistling, around the work shop, prodding at things with his cane, and wound up leaning against one end of the bench.

"Last day of the century," he piped, "makes a fellow pause and study. I've seen fifty-three years of the old century—seen the electric light, the telephone, the phonograph, the fast printing press, the transcontinental railroad, the steam thresher, the gasoline engine—and all its wonders clear down to Judge Tom's devil wagon. That's a good deal for one short life. I've seen industry revolutionized—leaving the homes of the people, and herding into the great factories. I've seen steam revolutionize the daily habits of men, and distort their thoughts; one man can't run a steam engine; it takes more than one man to own one. So have I seen capital rise in the world until it is greater than kings, greater

than courts, greater than governments—greater than God himself as matters stand, Cap—I'm terribly afraid that's true."

The Doctor was serious. His high voice was calm, and he smoked a while in peace. "But," he added reflectively—"Cap, I want to tell you something more wonderful than all; I've seen seven absolutely honest men elected this year to the State Senate—I've sounded them, felt them out, had all kinds of reports from all kinds of people on those seven men. Each man thinks he's alone, and there are seven."

The Doctor leaned over to the Captain and said confidentially, "Cap—we meet next week. Listen here. I was elected without a dollar of the old spider's money. He fought me for that smelter law on the quiet. Now look here; you watch my smoke. I'm going to organize those seven, and make eight and you're going to see some fighting."

"You ain't going to fight the party, are you, Doc?" asked the amazed Captain, as though he feared that the Doctor would fall dead if he answered yes. But the Doctor grinned and said: "Maybe—if it fights me."

"Well, Doc—" cried the Captain, "don't you think—"

"You bet I think—that's what's the matter. The smelter lawsuit's made me think. They want to control government so they can have a license to murder. That's what it means. Watch 'em blight Denny Hogan's lungs down on the dump; watch 'em burn 'em up and crush 'em in the mines—by evading the mining laws; watch 'em slaughter 'em on the railroads; murder is cheap in this country—if you control government and get a slaughter license."

The Doctor laughed. "That's the old century—and say, Cap—I'm with the new. You know old Browning—he says:

> "It makes me mad
> To think what men will do an' I am dead."

The Doctor waved his cane furiously, and grinned as he threw back his head, laughed silently, kicked out one leg, and stood with one eye cocked, looking at the speechless Captain. "Well, Cap—speak up—what are you going to do about it?"

"'Y gory, Doc, you certainly do talk like a Populist—eh?" was all the Captain could reply. The Doctor toddled to the

door, and standing there sang back: "Well, Cap—do you think the Lord Almighty laid off all the angels and quit work on the world when he invented Tom Van Dorn's automobile—that it is the last new thing that will ever be tried?"

And with that, the Doctor went out into the alley and through his alley gate into his house. But the Captain's mind was set going by the Doctor's parting words. He was considering what might follow the invention of Tom Van Dorn's automobile. There was that chain, and there was his sprocket. It would work—he knew it would work and save much power and much noise. But the sprocket must be longer, and stronger. Then, he thought, if the wire spokes and the ball-bearing and rubber tires of the bicycle had made the automobile possible, and now that they were getting the gasoline engine of the automobile perfected so that it would generate such vast power in such a small space—what if they could conserve and apply that power through his invention—what if the gasoline engine might not through his Household Horse some day generate and use a power that would lift a man off the earth? What then? As he tapped the bolts and turned the screws and put his little device together, he dreamed big dreams of the future when men should fly, and the boundaries of nations would disappear and tariffs would be impossible. This shocked him, and he tried to figure out how to prevent smuggling by flying machines; but as he could not, he dreamed on about the time when war would be abolished among civilized men, because of his invention.

So while he was dreaming in matter—forming the first vague nebulæ of coming events, the infinite intelligence washing around us all, floating this earth, and holding the stars in their courses, sent a long, thin fleck of a wave into the mind of this man who stood working and dreaming in the twilight while the old century was passing. And while he saw his vision, other minds in other parts of the earth saw their visions. Some of these myriad visions formed part of his, and his formed part of theirs, and all were part of the great vision that was brooding upon the bourne of time and space. And other visions, parts of the great vision of the Creator, were moving with quickening life in other minds and hearts. The disturbed vision of justice that flashed

through the Doctor's mind was a part of the vast cycle of visions that were hovering about this earth. It was not his alone, millions held part of it; millions aspired, they knew not why, and staked their lives upon their faith that there is a power outside ourselves that makes for righteousness. And as the waves of infinite, resistless, all-encompassing love laved the world that New Year's night that cast the new Century upon the strange shores of time, let us hope that the dreams of strong men stirred them deeply that they might move wisely upon that mysterious tide that is drawing humanity to its unknown goal.

CHAPTER XXXII

WHEREIN VIOLET HOGAN TAKES UP AN OLD TRADE AND MARGARET VAN DORN SEEKS A HIGHER PLANE

THE new Century brought to Harvey such plenitude that all night and all day the smelter fires painted the sky up and down the Wahoo Valley; all night long and all day long the miners worked in the mines, and all through the night and the long day the great cement factory and the glass factories belched forth their lurid fumes. The trolley cars went creaking and moaning around the curves through the mean, dirty, squalid, little streets of the mining and manufacturing towns. They whined impatiently as they sailed across the prairie grass under the befogged sunshine between the settlements, but always they brought up with their loads at Harvey. So Harvey grew to be a prosperous inland city, and the Palace Hotel with its onyx and marble office, once the town's pride, found itself with all its striving but a third-class hostelry, while the three-story building of the Traders' Bank looked low and squatty beside its six and seven storied neighbors. The tin cornices of Market Street were wiped away, and yellow brick and terra cotta and marble took the place of the old ornaments of which the young town had been so proud. The thread of wires and pipes that made the web of the spider behind the brass sign, multiplied and the pipes and the rails and the cables that carried his power grew taut and strong. New people by thousands had come into the town and gradually the big house, the Temple of Love on Hill Crest, that had been deserted during the first years of its occupancy, filled up. Judge Thomas Van Dorn and his handsome wife were seen in the great hotels of New York and Boston, and in Europe more or less, though the acquaintances they made in Europe and in the East were no longer needed to fill their home. But the old settlers of Harvey maintained their

siege. It was at a Twelfth Night festivity when young people from all over the Valley and from all over the West were masqueing in the great house, that Judge Van Dorn, to please a pretty girl from Baltimore whom the Van Dorns had met in Italy, shaved his mustache and appeared before the guests with a naked lip. The pursed, shrunken, sensuous lips of the cruel mouth showed him so mercilessly that Mrs. Van Dorn could not keep back a little scream of horror the first time he stood before her with his shaved lip. But she changed her scream to a baby giggle, and he did not know how he was revealed. So he went about ever after, preening himself that his smooth face gave him youth, and strutting inordinately because some of the women he knew told him he looked like a boy of twenty-five—instead of a man in his forties. He was always suave, always creakingly debonaire, always, even in his meannesses, punctilious and airy.

So the old settlers sometimes were fooled by his attitude toward Margaret, his wife. He bore toward her in public that shallow polish of attention, which puzzled those who knew that they were never together by themselves when he could help it, that he spent his evenings at the City Club, and that often at the theater they sat almost back to back unconsciously during the whole performance. But after the curtain was down, the polite husband was the soul of attendance upon the beautiful wife—her coat, her opera glasses, her trappings of various sorts flew in and out of his eager hands as though he were a conjurer playing with them for an audience. For he was a proud man, and she was a vain woman, and they were striving to prove to a disapproving world that the bargain they had made was a good one.

Yet the old settlers of Harvey felt instinctively that the price of their Judge's bargain was not so trifling a matter as at first the happy couple had esteemed it. The older people saw the big house glow with light as the town spread over the hill and prosperity blackened the Valley. The older people played their quiet games of bridge, by night, and said little. Judge Van Dorn polished the periods of his orations, kept himself like a race horse, strutted like a gobbler, showed his naked mouth, held himself always tightly in hand, kept his eye out for a pretty face, wherever it might be found,

drank a little too much at night at the City Club; not much too much but a very little too much—so much that he needed something to brighten his eyes in the morning.

But whatever the Judge's views were on the chess game of the cosmos, Margaret, his wife, had no desire to beat God at his own game. She was a seeker, who always was looking for a new God. God after God had passed in weary review before her. She was always ready to tune up with the infinite, and to ignore the past—a most comfortable thing to do under the circumstances.

As she turned into Market Street one February morning of the New Year in the New Century, leading her dachshund, she was revolving a deep problem in her head. She was trying to get enough faith to believe that her complexion did not need a renovation. She knew that the skin-thought she kept holding was earth-bound and she had tried to shake it, but it wouldn't shake. She had progressed far enough in the moment's cult to overcome a food-thought when her stomach hurt her, by playing a stiff game of bridge for a little stake. But the skin-thought was with her, and she was nervous and irritable and upon the verge of tears for nothing at all. Moreover, her dog kept pulling at his leash, so altogether her cup was running over and she went into Mr. Brotherton's store to ask him to try to find an English translation of a highly improper German book with a pious title about which she had heard from a woman from Chicago who had been visiting her.

Now Mr. Brotherton had felt the impulse of the town's prosperity in his business. The cigar stand was gone. In its place was a handsome plain glass case containing expensive books—books bound in vellum, books in hand-tooled leather, books with wide, ragged margins of heavy linen paper around deep black types with illuminated initials at the chapter heads; books filled with extravagant illustrations, books so beautiful that Mr. Brotherton licked his chops with joy when he considered the difference between the cost mark and the price mark. The Amen Corner was gone—the legend that had come down from the pool room, "Better go to bed lonesome than wake up in debt," had been carted to the alley. While the corner formerly occupied by the old walnut bench

still held a corner seat, it was a corner seat with sharp angles, with black stain upon it, and upholstered in rich red leather, and red leather pillows lounged luxuriously in the corners of the seat; a black, angular table and a red, angular shade over a green angular lamp sat where the sawdust box had been. True—a green angular smoker's set also was upon the table—the only masculine appurtenance in the corner; but it was clearly a sop thrown out to offended and exiled mankind—a mere mockery of the solid comfort of the sawdust box, filled with cigar stubs and ashes that had made the corner a haven for weary man for nearly a score of years. Above the black-stained seat ran a red dado and upon that in fine old English script, where once the old sign of the Corner had been nailed, there ran this legend:

"'The sweet serenity of Books' and Wallpaper, Stationery and Office Supplies."

For Mr. Brotherton's commercial spirit could not permit him to withhold the fact that he had enlarged his business by adding such household necessities as wall paper and such business necessities as stationery and office supplies. Thus the town referred ever after to Mr. Brotherton's "Sweet serenity of Books and Wallpaper," and so it was known of men in Harvey.

When Mrs. Van Dorn entered, she was surprised; for while she had heard casually of the changes in Mr. Brotherton's establishment, she was not prepared for the effulgence of refined and suppressed grandeur that greeted her.

Mr. Brotherton, in a three buttoned frock coat, a rich black ascot tie and suitable gray trousers, came forward to meet her.

"Ah, George," she exclaimed in her baby voice, "really what a lit-ry," that also was from her Chicago friend, "what a lit-ry atmosphere you have given us."

Mr. Brotherton's smile pleaded guilty for him. He waved her to a seat among the red cushions. "How elegant," she simpered, "I just think it's perfectly swell. Just like Marshall Field's. I must bring Mrs. Merrifield in when she comes down—Mrs. Merrifield of Chicago. You know, Mr. Brotherton," it was the wife of the Judge who spoke, "I

think we should try to cultivate those whose wide advantages make our association with them a liberal education. What is it Emerson says about Friendship—in that wonderful essay—I'm sure you'll recall it."

And Mr. Brotherton was sure he would too, and indicated as much, for as he had often said to Mr. Fenn in their literary confidences, "Emerson is one of my best moving lines." And Mrs. Van Dorn continued confidentially: "Now there's a book, a German book—aren't those Germans candid—you know I'm of German extraction, and I tell the Judge that's where I get my candor. Well, there's a German book—I can't pronounce it, so I've written it out—there; will you kindly order it?" Mr. Brotherton took the slip and went to the back of the store to make a memorandum of the order. He left the book counter in charge of Miss Calvin—Miss Ave Calvin—yes, Miss Ave Maria Calvin, if you must know her full name, which she is properly ashamed of. But it pleased her mother twenty years before and as Mr. Calvin was glad to get into the house on any terms when the baby was named, it went Ave Maria Calvin, and Ave Maria Calvin stood behind the counter reading the *Bookman* and trying to remember the names of the six best sellers so that she could order them for stock.

Mrs. Van Dorn, who kept Mrs. Calvin's one card conspicuously displayed in her silver card case in the front hall, saw an opportunity to make a little social hay, so she addressed Miss Calvin graciously: "Good morning, Ave—how is your dear mother? What a charming effect Mr. Brotherton has produced!" Then Mrs. Van Dorn dropped the carefully modulated voice a trifle lower: "When the book comes that I just ordered, kindly slip it to one side; I wouldn't have Mr. Brotherton—he might misunderstand. But you can read it if you wish—take it home over night. It's very broadening."

When Mr. Brotherton returned the baby voice prattled at him. The voice was saying, "I was just telling Ave how dead swell it is here. I just can't get over it—in Harvey—dear old Harvey; do you remember when I was a little school teacher down in the Prospect schoolhouse and you used to order Chautauqua books—such an innocent little school girl

—don't you remember? We wouldn't say how long ago that was, would we, Mr. Brotherton? Oh, dear, no. Isn't it nice to talk over old times? Did you know the Jared Thurstons have left Colorado and have moved to Iowa where Jared has started another paper? Lizzie and I used to be such chums —she and Violet and I—where is Violet now, Mr. Brotherton? Oh, yes, I remember Mrs. Herdicker said she lives next door to the kindergarten—down in South Harvey. Isn't it terrible the way Anne Sands did—just broke her father's heart. And Nate Perry quarrelling with ten million dollars. Isn't this a strange world, Mr. Brotherton?"

Mr. Brotherton confessed for the world and Mrs. Van Dorn shook her over-curled head sadly. She made some other talk with Mr. Brotherton which he paraphrased later for Henry Fenn and when Mrs. Van Dorn went out, Mr. Brotherton left the door open to rid the room of the scent of attar of roses and said to Miss Calvin:

"Well, s—," but checked himself and went on in his new character of custodian of "The Sweet Serenity of Books and Wall Paper," but he added as a compromise:

" 'And for bonnie Annie Laurie' I certainly would make a quick get-away!"

After which reflection, Mr. Brotherton walked down the long store room to his dark stained desk, turned on the electric under the square copper shade, and began to figure up his accounts. But a little social problem kept revolving in his head. It was suggested by Mrs. Van Dorn and by something she had said. Beside Mrs. Van Dorn in her tailored gown and seal-skin, with her spanking new midwinter hat to match her coat, dragging the useless dog after her, he saw the picture of another woman who had come in the day before—a woman no older than Margaret Van Dorn—yet a broken woman, with rounded shoulders who rarely smiled, wishing to hide her broken teeth, who wheeled one baby and led another, and shooed a third and slipped into the corner near the magazine counter and thumbed over the children's fashions in the *Delineator* eagerly and looked wistfully at the beautiful things in the store. Her red hands and brown skin showed that she had lived a rough, hard life, and that it had spent her and wasted her and taken everything she prized—

and given her nothing—nothing but three over-dressed children and a husband whose industrial status had put its heavy mark on her.

Mr. Brotherton's memory went back ten years, and recalled the two girls together—Violet and Margaret. Both were light-headed and vain; so far as their relations with Van Dorn were concerned, one was as blamable as the other. Yet one had prospered and the other had not—and the one who had apparently suffered most had upon the whole lived the cleaner, more normal life—and Mr. Brotherton drummed his penholder upon the black desk before him and questioned the justice of life.

But, indeed, if we must judge life's awards and benefits from the material side there is no justice in life. If there was any difference between the two women whom Tom Van Dorn had wronged—difference in rewards or punishments, it must have been in their hearts. It is possible that in her life of motherhood and wifehood, in the sacrifices that broke her body and scarred her face, Violet Mauling may have been compensated by the love she bore the children upon whom she lavished her life. For she had that love, and she did squander—in blind vain folly—the strength of her body, afterwards the price of her soul—upon her children. As for Margaret Van Dorn—Mr. Brotherton was no philosopher. He could not pity her. Yet she too had given all. She had given her mind—and it was gone. She had given her heart—and it was gone also, and she had given that elusive blending of the heart and mind we call her soul—and that was gone, too. Mr. Brotherton could see that they were gone—all gone. But he could not see that her loss was greater than Violet's.

That night when Dennis Hogan came in for his weekly *Fireside Companion* as he said, "for the good woman," Mr. Brotherton, for old sake's sake, put in something in paper backs by Marie Corelli, and a novel by Ouida; and then, that he might give until it hurt, he tied up a brand new *Ladies' Home Journal*, and said, as he locked up the store and stepped into the chill night air with Mr. Hogan: "Dennis—tell Violet—I sent 'em in return for the good turns she used to do me

when I was mayor and she was in Van Dorn's office and drew up the city ordinances—she'll remember."

"Indeed she will, George Brotherton—that she will. Many's the night she's talked me to sleep of them golden days of her splendor—indeed she will."

They walked on together and Hogan said: "Well—I turn at the next crossin'. I'm goin' home and I'm glad of it. Up in the mornin' at five; off on the six-ten train, climbin' the slag dump at seven, workin' till six, home on the six-fifteen train, into the house at seven; to bed at ten, up at five, eat and work and sleep—sleep and eat and work, fightin' the dump by day and fightin' the fumes in me chist by night—all for a dollar and sixty a day; and if we jine a union, we get canned, and if we would seek dissipation, we're invited to go down to the Company hall and listen to Tommy Van Dorn norate upon what he calls the 'de-hig-nity of luh-ay-bor.' Damn sight of dignity labor has, lopin' three laps ahead of the garnishee from one year's end to the other."

He laughed a good-natured, creaking laugh, and said as he waved his hand to part with Mr. Brotherton—"Well, anny-how, the good woman will thank you for the extra readin'; not that she has time to read it, God knows, but it gives the place a tone when Laura Nesbit drops in for a bit of a word of help about the makin' of the little white things she's doin' for the Polish family on 'D' Street these days." In another minute Brotherton heard the car moaning at the curve, and saw Hogan get in. It was nearly midnight when Hogan got to sleep; for the papers that Brotherton sent brought back "the grandeur that was Greece," and he had to hear how Mr. Van Dorn had made Mr. Brotherton mayor and how they had both made Dr. Nesbit Senator, and how ungrateful the Doctor was to turn against the hand that fed him, and many other incidents and tales that pointed to the renown of the unimpeachable Judge, who for seven years had reigned in the humble house of Hogan as a first-rate god.

That night Hogan tossed as the fumes in his lungs burned the tissues and at five he got up, made the fire, helped to dress the oldest child while his wife prepared the breakfast. He missed the six-ten car, and being late at work stopped in to

take a drink at the Hot Dog, near the dump on the company ground, thinking it would put some ginger into him for the day's work. For two hours or so the whiskey livened him up, but as the forenoon grew old, he began to yawn and was tired.

"Hogan," called the dump-boss, "go down to the powder house and bring up a box of persuaders."

The slag was hard and needed blasting. Hogan looked up, said "What?" and before the dump boss could speak again Hogan had started down and around the dump to the powder house, near the saloon. He went into the powder house, and then came out, carrying a heavy box. At the sidewalk edge, Hogan, who was yawning, stumbled—they saw him stumble, two men standing in the door of the Hot Dog saloon a block away, and they told the people at the inquest that that was the last they saw. A great explosion followed. The men about the dump huddled for a long minute under freight cars, then crawled out, and the dump boss called the roll; Hogan was missing. In an hour they came and took Mrs. Hogan to the undertaker's room near the smelter—where so many women had stood beside death in its most awful forms. She had her baby in her arms, with another plucking at her skirts and she stood mutely beside the coffin that they would not open. For she knew what other women knew about the smelter, knew that when they will not open the coffin, it must not be opened. So the little procession rode to the Hogan home, where Laura Van Dorn was waiting. Perhaps it was because she could not see the face of the dead that it seemed unreal to the widow. But she did not moan nor cry—after the first scream that came when she knew the worst. Stolidly she went through her tasks until after the funeral.

Then she called Laura into the kitchen and said, as she pressed out her black satin and tried to hide the threadbare seams that had been showing for years: "Mrs. Van Dorn, I'm going to do something you won't like." To Laura's questioning eyes Violet answered: "I know your ma, or some one else has told you all about me—but," she shut her mouth tightly and said slowly:

"But no matter what they say—I'm going to the Judge;

he's got to make the railroad company pay and pay well. It's all I've got on earth—for the children. We have three dollars in my pocketbook and will have to wait until the fifteenth before I get his last month's wages, and I know they'll dock him up to the very minute of the day—that day! I wouldn't do it for anything else on earth, Mrs. Van Dorn—wild horses couldn't drag me there—but I'm going to the Judge—for the children. He can help."

So, putting on her bedraggled black picture hat with the red ripped off, Violet Hogan mounted the courthouse steps and went to the office of the Judge. A sorry, broken, haggard figure she cut there in the Judge's office. She would have told him her story—but he interrupted: "Yes, Violet—I read it in the *Times*. But what can I do—you know I'm not allowed to take a case and, besides, he was working for the railroad, and you know, Violet, he assumed the risk. What do they offer you?"

"Judge—for God's sake don't talk that way to me. That's the way you used to talk to those miners' wives—ugh!" she cried. "I remember it all—that assumed risk. Only this—he was working ten hours a day on a job that wouldn't let him sleep, and he oughtn't to be working but eight hours, if they hadn't sneaked under the law. They've offered me five hundred, Judge—five hundred—for a man, five hundred for our three children—and me. You can make them do better—oh, I know you can. Oh, please for the sake—oh!"

She looked at him with her battered face, and as her mouth quivered, she tried to hide her broken teeth. He saw she was about to give way to tears. He dreaded a scene. He looked at her impatiently and finally gripping himself after a decision, he said:

"Now, Violet, take a brace. Five hundred is what they always give in these cases." He smiled suavely at her and she noticed for the first time that his lip was bare and started at the cruel mouth that leered at her.

"But," he added expansively, "for old sake's sake—I'm going to do something for you." He rose and stood over her. "Now, Violet," he said, strutting the diagonal of his room, and smiling blandly at her, "we both know why I shouldn't

give you my personal check—nor why you shouldn't have any cash that you cannot account for. But the superintendent of the smelter, who is also the general manager of the railroad, is under some obligations to me, and I'll give you this note to him." He sat down and wrote:

"For good reasons I desire one hundred dollars added to your check to the widow of Dennis Hogan who presents this, and to have the same charged to my personal account on your books."

He signed his name with a flourish, and after reading the note handed it to the woman.

She looked at him and her mouth opened, showing her broken, ragged teeth. Then she rose.

"My God, Tom Van Dorn—haven't you any heart at all! Six hundred dollars with three little children—and my man butchered by a law you made—oh," she cried as she shook her head and stood dry-eyed and agonized before him—"I thought you were a man—that you were my friend way down deep in your heart—I thought you were a man."

She picked up the paper, and at the door turned and said: "And you could get me thousands from the company for my hundreds by the scratch of your pen—and I thought you were a man." She opened the door, looked at him beseechingly, and repeating her complaint, turned away and left him.

She heard the click of the door-latch behind her and she knew that the man behind the door in whom she had put her faith was laughing at her. Had she not seen him laugh a score of times in other years at the misery of other women? Had they not sat behind this door, he and she, and made sport of foolish women who came asking the disagreeable, which he ridiculed as the impossible? Had she not sat with him and laughed at his first wife, when she had gone away after some protest? The thought of his mocking face put hate into her heart and she went home hardened toward all the world. Laura Van Dorn was with the Hogan children, and when Violet entered the house, she gathered them to her heart with a mad passion and wept—a woman without hope—a woman spurned and mocked in the only holy place she had in her heart.

Laura saw the widowed mother hysterically fondling the children, madly caressing them, foolishly chattering over them, and when Violet made it clear that she wished to be alone, Laura left. But if she could have heard Violet babbling on during the evening, of the clothes she would buy for the youngsters, about the good times they would have with the money, about the ways they were going to spend the little fortune that was theirs, Laura Van Dorn—thrifty, frugal, shrewd Laura, might have helped the thoughtless woman before it was too late. But even if Laura had interfered, it would have been but for a few months or a few years at most.

The end was inevitable—whether it had been five hundred or six hundred or five thousand or six thousand. For Violet was a prodigal bred and born. At first she tried to get some work. But when she found she had to leave the children alone in the house or in care of a neighbor or on the streets, she gave up her job. For when she came home, she found the foolish frills and starched tucks in which she kept them, dirty and torn, and some way she felt that they were losing social caste by the low estate of their clothes, so she bought them silks and fine linens while her money lasted, and when it was gone in the spring—then they were hungry, and needy; and she could not leave them by day.

If the poor were always wise, and the rich were always foolish, if hardship taught us sense, and indulgence made us giddy, what a fine world it would be. How virtue would be rewarded. How vice would be rebuked. But wisdom does not run with social rank, nor with commercial rating. Some of us who are poor are exceedingly foolish, and some of those who are rich have a world of judgment. And Violet Hogan, —poor and mad with a mother love that was as insane as an animal's when she saw her children hungry and needy, knew before she knew anything else that she must live with them by day. So she went out at night—went out into the streets —not of South Harvey—but over into the streets of Foley, down to Magnus and Plain Valley—out into the dark places. There Violet by night took up the oldest trade in the world, and came home by day a mad, half crazed mothering animal who covers her young in dread and fear.

When Laura knew the truth—knew it surely in spite of

Violet's studied deceptions, and her outright falsehoods, the silver in the woman's laugh was muffled for a long time. She tried to help the mad mother; but the mother would not admit the truth, would not confess that she needed help. Violet maintained the fiction that she was working in the night shift at the glass factory in Magnus, and by day she starched and ironed and pressed and washed for the overdressed children and as she said, "tried to keep them somebody." Moreover, she would not let them play with the dirty children of the neighborhood, but such is the fear of social taint among women, that soon the other mothers called their children home when the Hogan children appeared.

When Violet discovered that her trade was branding her children—she moved to Magnus and became part of the drab tide of life that flows by us daily with its heartbreak unheeded, its sorrows unknown, its anguish pent up and uncomforted.

Now much meditation on the fate of Violet Hogan and upon the luck of Margaret Van Dorn had made George Brotherton question the moral government of the universe and, being disturbed in his mind, he naturally was moved to language. So one raw spring day when no one was in the Amen Corner but Mr. Fenn, in a moment of inadvertent sobriety, Mr. Brotherton opened up his heart and spoke thus:

"Say, Henry—what's a yogi?" Mr. Fenn refused to commit himself. Mr. Brotherton continued: "The Ex was in here the other day and she says that she thinks she's going to become a yogi. I asked her to spell it, and I told her I'd be for her against all comers. Then she explained that a yogi was some kind of an adept who could transcend space and time, and—well say, I said 'sure,' and she went on to ask me if I was certain we were not thinking matter instead of realizing it, and I says:

" 'I bite; what's the sell?'

"And the Ex says—'Now, seriously, Mr. Brotherton, something tells me that you have in your mind, if you would only search it out, vague intimations, left-over impressions of the day you were an ox afield.'

"And, well say, Henry, I says, 'No, madam, it is an ass that rises in me betimes.'

"And the Ex says, 'George Brotherton, you just never can talk sense.'

"So while I was wrapping up 'Sappho' and ordering her a book with a title that sounded like a college yell, she told me she was getting on a higher plane, and I bowed her out. Say, Hen—now wouldn't that jar you?—the Ex getting on a higher plane."

Mr. Fenn grinned—a sodden grin with a four days' beard on it, and dirty teeth, and heavy eyes, then looked stupidly at the floor and sighed and said,

"George, did you know I've quit?" To Mr. Brotherton's kindly smile the other man replied:

"Yes, sir, sawed 'er right off short—St. Patrick's Day. I thought I'd ought to quit last Fourth of July—when I tried to eat a live pinwheel. I thought I had gone far enough." He lifted up his burned-out eyes in the faded smile that once shone like an arc light, and said:

"Man's a fool to get tangled up with liquor. George, when I get my board bill paid—I'm going to quit the auctioning line, and go back to law. But my landlady's needing that money, and I'm a little behind—"

Mr. Brotherton made a motion for his pocket. "No, I don't want a cent of your money, George," Fenn expostulated. "I was just telling you how things are. I knew you'd like to know."

Mr. Brotherton came from behind the counter where he had been arranging his stock for the night, and grasped Henry Fenn's hand. "Say, Henry—you're all right. You're a man—I've always said so. I tell you, Hen, I've been to lots of funerals in this town first and last as pall-bearer or choir singer—pretty nearly every one worth while, but say, I'm right here to tell you that I have never went to one I was sorrier over than yours, Henry—and I'm mighty glad to see you're coming to again."

Henry Fenn smiled weakly and said: "That's right, George—that's right."

And Mr. Brotherton went on, "I claim the lady give you

the final push—not that she needed to push hard of course; but a little pulling might have held you."

Mr. Fenn rose to leave and sighed again as he stood for a moment in the doorway—"Yes, George, perhaps so—poor Maggie—poor Maggie."

Mr. Brotherton looked at the man a moment—saw his round hat with neither back nor front and only the wreck of a band around it, his tousled clothes, his shoes with the soles curling at the sides and the frowsy face, from which the man peered out a second and then slunk back again, and Mr. Brotherton took to his book shelf, scratched his head and indicated by his manner that life was too deep a problem for him.

CHAPTER XXXIII

IN WHICH THE ANGELS SHAKE A FOOT FOR HENRY FENN

THE business of life largely resolves itself into a preparation for the next generation. The torch of life moves steadily forward. For children primarily life has organized itself to satisfy decently and in order, the insatiate primal hungers that motive mankind. It was with a wisdom deeper than he understood that George Brotherton spoke one day, as he stood in his doorway and saw Judge Van Dorn hurrying across the street to speak to Lila. "There," roared Mr. Brotherton to Nathan Perry, "well, say —there's the substance all right, man." And then as the Judge turned wearily away with slinking shoulders to avoid meeting the eyes of his wife, plump, palpable, and always personable, who came around the corner, Mr. Brotherton, with a haw-haw of appreciation of his obvious irony, cried, "And there's the shadow—I don't think." But it was the substance and the shadow nevertheless, and possibly the Judge knew them as the considerations of his bargain with the devil. For always he was trying to regain the substance; to take Lila to his heart, where curiously there seemed some need of love, even in a heart which was consecrated in the very temple of love. Without realizing that he was modifying his habits of life, he began to drop in casually to see the children's Christmas exercises, and Thanksgiving programs, and Easter services at John Dexter's church. From the back seat where he always sat alone, he sometimes saw the wealth of affection that her mother lavished on Lila, patting her ribbons, smoothing her hair, straightening her dress, fondling her, correcting her, and watching the child with eyes so full of love that they did not refrain sometimes from smiling in kindly appreciation into the eager, burning, tired eyes of the Judge. The mother

understood why he came to the exercises, and often she sent Lila to her father for a word. The town knew these things, and the Judge knew that the town knew, and even then he could not keep away. He had to carry the torch of life, whether he would or not, even though sometimes it must have scorched his proud, white hands. It was the only thing that burned with real fire in his heart.

With Laura Van Dorn the fact of her motherhood colored her whole life. Never a baby was born among her poor neighbors in the valley that she did not thrill with a keen delight at its coming, and welcome it with some small material token of her joy. In the baby she lived over again her own first days of maternity. But it was no play motherhood that restored her soul and refilled her receptacle of faith day by day. The bodily, huggable presence of her daughter continually unfolding some new beauty kept her eager for the day's work to close in the Valley that she might go home to drop the vicarious happiness that she brought in her kindergarten for the real happiness of a home.

Often Grant Adams, hurrying by on his lonely way, paused to tell Laura of a needy family, or to bring a dirty, motherless child to her haven, or to ask her to go to some wayward girl, newly caught in the darker corners of the spider's web.

Doggedly day by day, little by little, he was bringing the workmen of the Valley to see his view of the truth. The owners were paying spies to spy upon him and he knew it, and the high places of his satisfaction came when, knowing a spy and marking him for a victim, Grant converted him to the union cause. With the booming of the big guns of prosperity in Harvey, he was a sort of undertone, a monotonous drum, throbbing through the valley a menace beneath it all. Once—indeed, twice, as he worked, he organized a demand for higher wages in two or three of the mines, and keeping himself in the background, yet cautiously managing the tactics of the demand, he won. He held Sunday meetings in such halls as the men could afford to hire and there he talked—talked the religion of democracy. As labor moved about in the world, and as the labor press of the country began to know of Grant, he acquired a certain fame as a speaker among labor leaders. And the curious situation he was creat-

ing gave him some reputation in other circles. He was good for an occasional story in a Kansas City or Chicago Sunday paper; and the *Star* reporter, sent to do the feature story, told of a lonely, indomitable figure who was the idol of the laboring people of the Wahoo Valley; of his Sunday meetings; of his elaborate system of organization; of his peaceful demands for higher wages and better shop conditions; of his conversion of spies sent to hinder him, of his never-ceasing effort, unsupported by outside labor leaders, unvisited by the aristocracy of the labor world, yet always respecting it, to preach unionism as a faith rather than as a material means for material advancement.

Generally the reporters devoted a paragraph to the question—what manner of man is this?—and intimating more or less frankly that he was a man of one idea, or perhaps broadening the suggestion into a query whether or not a man who would work for years, scorning fame, scorning regular employment and promotion, neglecting opportunities to rise as a labor leader in his own world, was not just a little mad. So it happened that without seeking fame, fame came to him. All over the Missouri Valley, men knew that Grant Adams, a big, lumbering, red-polled, lusty-lunged man with one arm burned off—and the story of the burning fixed the man always in the public heart—with a curious creed and a freak gift for expounding it, was doing unusual things with the labor situation in the Harvey district. And then one day a reporter came from Omaha who uncovered this bit of news in his Sunday feature story:

"Last week the Wahoo district was paralyzed by the announcement that Nathan Perry, the new superintendent of the Independent mines had raised his wage scale, and had acceded to every change in working conditions that the local labor organizations under Adams had asked. Moreover, he has unionized his mine and will recognize only union grievance committees in dealing with the men. The effect of such an announcement in a district where the avowed purpose of the mine operators is to run their own business as they please, may easily be imagined.

"Perry is a civil engineer from Boston Tech., a rich man's son, who married a rich man's daughter, and then cut loose from his father and father-in-law because of a political disagreement over the candidacy of the famous Judge Thomas Van Dorn for a judicial nomination a few years ago. Perry belongs to a new type in in-

dustry—rather newer than Adams's type. Perry is a keen eyed, boyish-looking young man who has no illusions about Adams's democracy of labor.

"'I am working out an engineering problem with men,' said Perry to a reporter to-day. 'What I want is coal in the cage. I figure that more wages will put more corn meal in a man's belly, more muscle on his back, more hustle in his legs, and more blood in his brain. And primarily I'm buying muscle and hustle and brains. If I can make the muscle and hustle and brains I buy, yield better dividends than the stuff my competitors buy, I'll hold my job. If not, I'll lose it. I am certainly working for my job.'

"Of course the town doesn't believe for a moment what Perry says. The town is divided. Part of the town thinks that Perry is an Adams convert and a fool, the other half of the town believes that the move is part of a conspiracy of certain eastern financial interests to get control of the Wahoo Valley properties by spreading dissension. Feeling is bitter and Adams and Perry are coming in for considerable abuse. D. Sands, the local industrial entrepreneur, has raised the black flag on his son-in-law, and an interesting time looms ahead."

But often at night in Perry's home in South Harvey, where Morty Sands and Grant Adams loved to congregate, there were hot discussions on the labor question. For Nathan Perry was no convert of Grant Adams.

As the men wrangled, many an hour sat Anne Perry singing the nest song as she made little things for the lower bureau drawer. Sometimes in the evening, Morty would sit by the kitchen stove, sadly torn in heart, between the two debaters, seeing the justice of Grant's side as an ethical question, but admiring the businesslike way in which Nathan waved aside ethical considerations, damned Grant for a crazy man, and proclaimed the gospel of efficiency.

Often Grant walked home from these discussions with his heart hot and rebellious. He saw life only in its spiritual aspect and the logic of Nathan Perry angered him with its conclusiveness.

Often as he walked Kenyon was upon his heart and he wondered if Margaret missed the boy; or if the small fame that the boy was making with his music had touched her vanity with a sense of loss. He wondered if she ever wished to help the child. The whole town knew that the Nesbits were sending Kenyon to Boston to study music, and that Amos Adams and Grant could contribute little to the child's support. Grant wondered, considering the relations between

the Van Dorns and Nesbits, whether sometimes Margaret did not feel a twinge of irritation or regret at the course of things.

He could not know that even as he walked through the November night, Margaret Van Dorn was sitting in her room holding in her hand a tiny watch, a watch to delight a little girl's heart. On the inside of the back of the watch was engraved:

"To Lila
from her
Father, for
Her 10th birthday."

And opposite the inscription in the watch was pasted the photograph of the unhappy face of the donor. Margaret sat gazing at the trinket and wondering vaguely what would delight a little boy's heart as a watch would warm the heart of a little girl. It was not a sense of loss, not regret, certainly not remorse that moved her heart as she sat alone holding the trinket—discovered on her husband's dresser; it was a weak and footless longing, and a sense of personal wrong that rose against her husband. He had something which she had not. He could give jeweled watches, and she—

But if she only could have read life aright she would have pitied him that he could give only jeweled watches, only paper images of a dissatisfied face, only material things, the token of a material philosophy—all that he knew and all that he had, to the one thing in the world that he really could love. And as for Margaret, his wife, who lived his life and his philosophy, she, too, had nothing with which to satisfy the dull, empty feeling in her heart when she thought of Kenyon, save to make peace with it in hard metal and stupid stones. Thus does what we think crust over our souls and make us what we are.

Grant Adams, plodding homeward that night, turned from the thought of Margaret to the thought of Kenyon with a wave of joy, counting the days and weeks and the months until the boy should return for the summer. At home Grant sat down before the kitchen table and began a long talk that kept him until midnight. He had undertaken to organize all the unions of the place into a central labor council; the

miners, the smeltermen, the teamsters, the cement factory workers, the workers in the building trades. It was an experimental plan, under the auspices of the national union officers. Only a man like Grant Adams, with something more than a local reputation as a leader, would have been intrusted with the work. And so, after his day's toil for bread, he sat at his kitchen table, elaborately working his dream into reality.

That season the devil, if there is a devil who seeks to swerve us from what we deem our noblest purposes, came to Grant Adams disguised in an offer of a considerable sum of money to Grant for a year's work in the lecture field. The letter bearing the offer explained that by going out and preaching the cause of labor to the people, Grant would be doing his cause more good than by staying in Harvey and fighting alone. The thought came to him that the wider field of work would give him greater personal fame, to be used ultimately for a wider influence. All one long day as he worked with hammer and saw at his trade, Grant turned the matter over in his mind. He could see himself in a larger canvas, working a greater good. Perhaps some fleeting unformed idea came to him of a home and a normal life as other men live; for at noon, without consciously connecting her with his dream, he took his problem to Laura Van Dorn at her kindergarten. That afternoon he decided to accept the offer, and put much of his reason for acceptance upon Kenyon and the boy's needs. That night he penned a letter of acceptance to the lecture bureau and went to bed, disturbed and unsatisfied. Before he slept he turned and twisted, and finally threshed himself to sleep. It was a light fragmentary sleep, that moves in and out of some strange hypnoidal state where the lower consciousness and the normal consciousness wrestle for the control of reason. Then after a long period of half-waking dreams, toward morning, Grant sank into a profound sleep. In that sleep his soul, released from all that is material, rose and took command of his will.

When Grant awoke, it was still black night. For a few seconds he did not know where he was—nor even who he was, nor what. He was a mere consciousness. The first glimmer of identity that came to him came with a roaring

"No" that repeated itself over and over, "No—no," cried the voice of his soul—"you are no mere word spinner; you are a fighter; you are pledged, body and soul; you are bought with a price—no, no, no."

And then he knew where he was and he knew surely and without doubt or quaver of faith that he must not give up his place in the fight. When he thought of Kenyon living on the bounty of the Nesbits, he thought also of Dick Bowman, ordering his own son under the sliding earth to hold the shovel over Grant's face in the mine.

So Grant Adams bent his shoulders to this familiar burden. In the early morning, before his father and Jasper were up, the gaunt, ungainly figure hurried with his letter of refusal to the South Harvey Station and put the letter on the seventen train for Chicago.

That evening, sitting on their front porch, the Dexters talked over Grant's decision. "Well," said John Dexter, looking up into the mild November sky, and seeing the brown gray smudge of the smelter there, "so Grant has sidled by another devil in his road. We have seen that women won't stop him; it's plain that money nor fame won't stop him, though they clearly tore his coat tails. I imagine from what Laura says he must have decided once to accept."

"Yes," answered his wife, "but it does seem to me, if my old father needed care as his does, and my brother had to accept charity, I'd give that particular devil my whole coat and see if I couldn't make a bargain with him for a little money, at some small cost."

"Mother Eve—Mother Eve," smiled the minister, "you women are so practical—we men are the real idealists—the only dreamers who stand by our dreams in this wicked, weary world."

He leaned back in his chair. "There is still one more big black devil waiting for Grant: Power—the love of power which is the lust of usefulness—power may catch Grant after he has escaped from women and money and fame. Vanity—vanity, saith the preacher—Heaven help Grant in the final struggle with the big, black devil of vanity."

Yet, after all, vanity has in it the seed of a saving grace that has lifted humanity over many pitfalls in the

world. For vanity is only self-respect multiplied; and when that goes—when men and women lose their right to lift their faces to God, they have fallen upon bad times indeed. It was even so good a man as John Dexter himself, who tried to put self-respect into the soul of Violet Hogan, and was mocked for it.

"What do they care for me?" she cried, as he sat talking to her in her miserable home one chill November day. "Why should I pay any attention to them? Once I chummed with Mag Müller, before she married Henry Fenn, and I was as good as she was then—and am now for that matter. She knew what I was, and I knew what she was going to be—we made no bones of it. We hunted in pairs—as women like to. And I know Mag Müller. So why should I keep up for her?"

The woman laughed and showed her hollow mouth and all the wrinkles of her broken face, that the paint hid at night. "And as for Tom Van Dorn—I was a decent girl before I met him, Mr. Dexter—and why in God's name should I try to keep up for him?"

She shuddered and would have sobbed but he stopped her with: "Well, Violet—wife and I have always been your friends; we are now. The church will help you."

"Oh, the church—the church," she laughed. "It can't help me. Fancy me in church—with all the wives looking sideways at all the husbands to see that they didn't look too long at me. The church is for those who haven't been caught! God knows if there is a place for any one who has been caught—and I've been caught and caught and caught." She cried. "Only the children don't know—not yet, though little Tom—he's the oldest, he came to me and asked me yesterday why the other children yelled when I went out. Oh, hell—" she moaned, "what's the use—what's the use—what's the use!" and fell to sobbing with her head upon her arms resting upon the bare, dirty table.

It was rather a difficult question for John Dexter. Only one other minister in the world ever answered it successfully, and He brought public opinion down on Him. The Rev. John Dexter rose, and stood looking at the shattered thing that once had been a graceful, beautiful human body en-

closing an aspiring soul. He saw what society had done to break and twist the body; what society had neglected to do in the youth of the soul—to guide and environ it right—he saw what poverty had done and what South Harvey had done to cheat her of her womanhood even when she had tried to rise and sin no more; he remembered how the court-made law had cheated her of her rightful patrimony and cast her into the streets to spread the social cancer of her trade; and he had no answer. If he could have put vanity into her heart—the vanity which he feared for Grant Adams, he would have been glad. But her vanity was the vanity of motherhood; for herself she had spent it all. So he left her without answering her question. Money was all he could give her and money seemed to him a kind of curse. Yet he gave it and gave all he had.

When she saw that he was gone, Violet fell upon the tumbled, unmade bed and cried with all the vehemence of her unrestrained, shallow nature. For she was sick and weary and hungry. She had given her last dollar to a policeman the night before to keep from arrest. The oldest boy had gone to school without breakfast. The little children were playing in the street—they had begged food at the neighbors' and she had no heart to stop them. At noon when little Tom came in he found his mother sitting before a number of paper sacks upon the table waiting for him. Then the family ate out of the sacks the cold meal she had bought at the grocery store with John Dexter's money.

That night Violet shivered out into the cold over her usual route. She was walking through the railroad yards in Magnus when suddenly she came upon a man who dropped stealthily out of a dead engine. He carried something shining and tried to slip it under his coat when he saw her. She knew he was stealing brass, but she did not care; she called as they passed through the light from an arc lamp:

"Hello, sweetheart—where you going?"

The man looked up ashamed, and she turned a brazen, painted face at him and tried to smile without opening her lips.

Their eyes met, and the man caught her by the arm and cried·

"God, Violet—is this you—have you—" She cut him off with:

"Henry Fenn—why—Henry—"

The brass fell at his feet. He did not pick it up. They stood between the box cars in speechless astonishment. It was the man who found voice.

"Violet—Violet," he cried. "This is hell. I'm a thief and you—"

"Say it—say it—don't spare me," she cried. "That's what I am, Henry. It's all right about me, but how about you, how about you, Henry? This is no place for you! Why, you," she exclaimed—"why, you are—"

"I'm a drunken thief stealing brass couplings to get another drink, Violet."

He picked up the brass and threw it up into the engine, still clutching her arm so that she could not run away.

"But, girl—" he cried, "you've got to quit this—this is no way for you to live."

She looked at him to see what was in his mind. She broke away, and scrambled into the engine cab and put the brass where it could not fall out.

"You don't want that brass falling out, and them tracing you down here and jugging you—you fool," she panted as she climbed to the ground.

"Lookee here, Henry Fenn," she cried, "you're too good a man for this. You've had a dirty deal. I knew it when she married you—the snake; I know it—I've always known it."

The woman's voice was shrill with emotion. Fenn saw that she was verging on the hysterical, and took her arm and led her down the dark alley between the cars. The man's heart was touched—partly by the wreck he saw, and partly by her words. They brought back the days when he and she had seen their visions. The liquor had left his head, and he was a tremble. He felt her cold, hard hand, and took it in his own dirty, shaken hand to warm it.

"How are you living?" he asked.

"This way," she replied. "I got my children—they've got to live someway. I can't leave them day times and see 'em run wild on the streets—the little girls need me."

She looked up into his face as they hurried past an arc lamp, and she saw tears there.

"Oh, you got a dirty deal, Henry—how could she do it?" cried the woman.

He did not answer and they walked up a dingy street. A car came howling by.

"Got car fare," he asked. She nodded.

"Well, I haven't," he said, "but I'm going with you."

They boarded the car. They were the only passengers. They sat down, and he said, under the roar of the wheels:

"Violet—it's a shame—a damn shame, and I'm not going to stand for it. This a Market Street car?" he asked the conductor who passed down the aisle for their fares. The woman paid. When the conductor was gone, Henry continued:

"Three kids and a mother robbed by a Judge who knew better—just to stand in with the kept attorneys of the bar association. He could have knocked the shenanigan, that killed Hogan, galley west, if he'd wanted to, and no Supreme Court would have dared to set it aside. But no—the kept lawyers at the Capital, and all the Capitals have a mutual admiration society, and Tom has always belonged. So he turns you and all like you on the street, and Violet, before God I'm going to try to help you."

She looked at the slick, greasy, torn stiff hat, and the dirty, shiny clothes that years ago had been his Sunday best, and the shaggy face and the sallow, unwashed skin; and she remembered the man who was.

The car passed into South Harvey. She started to rise. "No," he said, stopping her, "you come on with me."

"Where are we going?" she asked. He did not answer. She sat down. Finally the car turned into Market Street. They got off at the bank corner. The man took hold of the woman's arm, and led her to the alley. She drew back.

He said: "Are you afraid of me—now, Violet?" They slinked down the alley and seeing a light in the back room of a store, Fenn stopped and went up to peer in.

"Come on," he said. "He's in."

Fenn tapped on the barred window and whistled three

notes. A voice inside cried, "All right, Henry—soon's I get this column added up."

The woman shrank back, but Fenn held her arm. Then the door opened, and the moon face of Mr. Brotherton appeared in a flood of light. He saw the woman, without recognizing her, and laughed:

"Are we going to have a party? Come right in, Marianna—here's the moated Grange, all right, all right."

As they entered, he tried to see her face, but she dropped her head. Fenn asked, "Why, George—don't you know her? It's Violet—Violet Mauling—who married Denny Hogan who was killed last winter."

George Brotherton looked at the painted face, saw the bald attempt at coquetry in her dress, and as she lifted her glazed, dead eyes, he knew her story instantly.

For she wore the old, old mask of her old, old trade.

"You poor, poor girl," he said gently. Then continued, "Lord—but this is tough."

He saw the miserable creature beside him and would have smiled, but he could not. Fenn began,

"George, I just got tired of coming around here every night after closing for my quarter or half dollar; so for two or three weeks I've been stealing. She caught me at it; caught me stripping a dead engine down in the yards by the round house."

"Yes," she cried, lifting a poor painted face, "Mr. Brotherton—but you know how I happened to be down there. He caught me as much as I caught him! And I'm the worst—Oh, God, when they get like me—that's the end!"

The three stood silently together. Finally Brotherton spoke: "Well," he drew a long breath, "well, they don't need any hell for you two—do they?" Then he added, "You poor, poor sheep that have gone astray. I don't know how to help you."

"Well, George—that's just it," replied Fenn. "No one can help us. But by God's help, George, I can help her! There's that much go left in me yet! Don't you think so, George?" he asked anxiously. "I can help her."

The weak, trembling face of the man moved George Broth-

erton almost to tears. Violet's instinct saw that Brotherton could not speak and she cried:

"George—I tell Henry he's had a dirty deal, too—Oh, such a dirty deal. I know he's a man—he never cast off a girl—like I was cast off—you know how. Henry's a man, George—a real man, and oh, if I could help him—if I could help him get up again. He's had such a dirty deal."

Brotherton saw her mouth in all its ugliness, and saw as he looked how tears were streaking the bedaubed face. She was repulsive beyond words, yet as she tried to hold back her tears, George Brotherton thought she was beautiful.

Fenn found his voice. "Now, here, George—it's like this: I don't want any woman; I've washed most of that monkey business out of me with whisky—it's not in me any more. And I know she's had enough of men. And I've brought her here—we've come here to tell you that part is straight—decent—square. I wanted you to know that—and Violet would, too—wouldn't you, Violet?" She nodded.

"Now, then, George—I'm her man! Do you understand—her man. I'm going to see that she doesn't have to go on the streets. Why, when she was a girl I used to beau her around, and if she isn't ashamed of a drunken thief—then in Christ's name, I'm going to help her."

He smiled out of his leaden eyes the ghost of his glittering, old, self-deprecatory smile. The woman remembered it, and bent over and kissed his dirty hand. She rose, and put her fingers gently upon his head, and sobbed:

"Oh, God, forgive me and make me worthy of this!"

There was an awkward pause. When the woman had controlled herself Fenn said: "What I want is to keep right on sleeping in the basement here—until I can get ahead enough to pay for my room. I'm not going to make any scandal for Violet, here. But we both feel better to talk it out with you."

They started for the back door. The front of the store was dark. Brotherton saw the man hesitate, and look down the alley to see if any one was in sight.

"Henry," said Brotherton, "here's a dollar. You might just as well begin fighting it out to-night. You go to the basement. I'll take Violet home."

The woman would have protested, but the big man said gently: "No, Violet—you were Denny Hogan's wife. He was my friend. You are Henry's ward—he is my friend. Let's go out the front way, Violet."

When they were gone, and the lights were out in the office of the bookstore, Henry Fenn slipped through the alley, went to the nearest saloon, walked in, stood looking at the whiskey sparkling brown and devilishly in the thick-bottomed cut glasses, saw the beer foaming upon the mahogany board, breathed it all in deeply, felt of the hard silver dollar in his pocket, shook as one in a palsy, set his teeth and while the tears came into his eyes stood and silently counted one hundred and another hundred; grinning foolishly when the loafers joked with him, and finally shuffled weakly out into the night, and ran to his cellar. And if Mr. Left's theory of angels is correct, then all the angels in heaven had their harps in their hands waving them for Henry, and cheering for joy!

CHAPTER XXXIV

A SHORT CHAPTER, YET IN IT WE EXAMINE ONE CANVAS HEAVEN, ONE REAL HEAVEN, AND TWO SNUG LITTLE HELLS

"THE idea of hell," wrote the Peach Blow Philosopher in the Harvey *Tribune*, "is the logical sequence of the belief that material punishments must follow spiritual offenses. For the wicked go unscathed of material punishments in this naughty world. And so the idea of Heaven is a logical sequence of the idea that only spiritual rewards come to men for spiritual services. Not that Heaven is needed to balance the accounts of good men after death—not at all. Good men get all that is coming to them here—whether it is a crucifixion or a crown—that makes no difference; crowns and crosses are mere material counters. They do not win or lose the game—nor even justly mark its loss or winning.

"The reason why Heaven is needed in the scheme of a neighborly man," said the Peach Blow Philosopher as he stood at his gate and reviewed the procession of pilgrims through the wilderness, "is this: The man who leads a decent life, is building a great soul. Obviously, this world is not the natural final habitat of great souls; for they occur here sporadically—though perhaps more and more frequently every trip around the sun. But Heaven is needed in any scheme of general decency for decency's sake, so that the decent soul for whose primary development the earth was hung in the sky, may have a place to find further usefulness, and a far more exceeding glory than may be enjoyed in this material dwelling place. So as we grow better and kinder in this world, hell sloughs off and Heaven is more real."

There is more of this dissertation—if the reader cares to pursue it, and it may be found in the files of the Harvey *Tribune*. It also appears as a footnote to an article by an eminent authority on Abnormal Psychology in a report on

Mr. Left, Vol. XXXII, p. 2126, of the Report of the Psychological Association. The remarks of the Peach Blow Philosopher credited in the Report of the Proceedings above noted, to Mr. Left, appeared in the Harvey *Tribune* Jan. 14, 1903. They may have been called forth by an editorial in the Harvey *Times* of January 9 of that same year. So as that editorial has a proper place in this narrative, it may be set down here at the outset of this chapter. The article from the *Times* is headed: "A Successful Career" and it follows:

"To-day Judge Thomas Van Dorn retires from ten years of faithful service as district judge of this district. He was appointed by the Governor and has been twice elected to this position by the people, and feeling that the honor should go to some other county in the district, the Judge was not a candidate for a third nomination or election. During the ten years of his service he has grown steadily in legal and intellectual attainments. He has been president of the state bar association, delegate from that body to the National Bar Association, member of several important committees in that organization, and now is at the head of that branch of the National Bar Association organized to secure a more strict interpretation of the Federal Constitution, as a bulwark of commercial liberty. Judge Van Dorn also has been selected as a member of a subcommittee to draft a new state constitution to be submitted to the legislature by the state bar association. So much for the recognition of his legal ability.

"As an orator he has won similar and enviable fame. His speech at the dedication of the state monument at Vicksburg will be a classic in American oratory for years. At the Marquette Club Banquet in Chicago last month his oration was reprinted in New York and Boston with flattering comment. Recently he has been engaged—though his term of service has just ended—in every important criminal action now pending west of the Mississippi. As a jury lawyer he has no equal in all the West.

"But while this practice is highly interesting, and in a sense remunerative, the Judge feels that the criminal practice makes too much of a drain upon his mind and body, and while he will defend certain great lumber operators and will

appear for the defense in the famous Yarborrough murder case, and is considering accepting an almost unbelievably large retainer in the Skelton divorce case with its ramifications leading into at least three criminal prosecutions, and four suits to change or perfect certain land titles, yet this kind of practice is distasteful to the Judge, and he will probably confine himself after this year to what is known as corporation practice. He has been retained as general counsel for all the industrial interests in the Wahoo Valley. The mine operators, the smelter owners, the cement manufacturers, the glass factories have seen in Judge Van Dorn a man in whom they all may safely trust their interests—amicably settling all differences between themselves in his office, and presenting for the Wahoo Valley an unbroken front in all future disputes—industrial or otherwise. This arrangement has been perfected by our giant of finance, Hon. Daniel Sands of the Traders' State Bank, who is, as every one knows, heavily interested in every concern in the Valley—excepting the Independent Coal Company, which by the way has preferred to remain outside of the united commercial union, and do business under its own flag—however dark that flag may be.

"This new career of Judge Van Dorn will be highly gratifying to his friends—and who is there who is not his friend?

"Courteous, knightly, impetuous, gallant Tom Van Dorn? What a career he has builded for himself in Harvey and the West.

"Scorning his enemies with the quiet contempt of the intellectual gladiator that he is, Tom Van Dorn has risen in this community as no other man young or old since its founding. His spacious home is the temple of hospitality; his magnificent talent is given freely, often to the poor and needy to whom his money flows in a generous stream whenever the call comes. His shrewd investment of his savings in the Valley have made him rich; his beautiful wife and his widening circle of friends have made him happy—his fine, active brain has made him great.

"The *Times* extends to the Judge upon his retirement from the bench the congratulations of an admiring community, and best wishes for future success."

Now perhaps it was not this article that inspired the Peach Blow Philosopher. It may have been another item in the same paper hidden away in the want column.

"Wanted—All the sewing and mending, quilt patching, sheet making, or other plain sewing that the good women of Harvey have to give out. I know certain worthy women with families, who need this work. Also woodsawing orders promptly filled by competent men out of work. I will bring work and the workers together. H. Fenn, care Brotherton Book & Stationery Co., 1127 Market Street."

Or if it was not that item, perhaps it was this one from the South Harvey *Derrick* of January 7, that called forth the Peach Blow Philosopher's remarks on Heaven:

"Mrs. Violet Hogan and family have rented the rooms adjoining Mrs. Van Dorn's kindergarten. Mrs. Hogan has made arrangements to provide ladies of South Harvey and the Valley in general with plain sewing by the piece. A day nursery for children has been fitted up by our genial George Brotherton, former mayor of Harvey, where mothers sewing may leave their children in an adjoining room."

Now the Heaven of the Peach Blow Philosopher is not gained at one bound. Even the painted, canvas Heaven of Thomas Van Dorn cost him something—to be exact, $100, which he took in "stock" of the *Times* company—which always had stock for sale, issued by a Price & Chanler Gordon job press whenever it was required. And the negotiations for the Judge's painted Heaven made by his partner, Mr. Joseph Calvin, of the renewed and reunited firm of Van Dorn & Calvin, were not without their painful moments. As, for instance, when the editor of the *Times* complained bitterly at having it agreed that he would have to mention in the article the Judge's "beautiful wife," specifically and in terms, the editor was for raising the price to $150, by reason of the laughing stock it would make of the paper, but compromised upon the promise of legal notices from the firm amounting to $100 within the following six months. Also there was a hitch in the negotiations hereinbefore mentioned when the *Times* was required to refer to the National Bar Association meeting at all. For it was notorious that the Judge's flourishing signature with "and wife" had been

photographed upon the register of a New York Hotel when he attended that meeting, whereas every one knew that Mrs. Van Dorn was in Europe that summer, and the photograph of the Judge's beautifully flourishing signature aforesaid was one of the things that persuaded the Judge to enter the active practice and leave the shades and solitudes of the bench for more strenuous affairs. To allude to the Judge's wife, and to mention the National Bar Association in the same article, struck the editor of the *Times* as so inauspicious that it required considerable persuasion on the part of the diplomatic Mr. Calvin, to arrange the matter.

So the Judge's Heaven bellied on its canvas, full of vain east wind, and fooled no one—not even the Judge, least of all his beautiful wife, who, knowing of the Bar Association incident, laughed a ribald laugh. Moreover, having abandoned mental healing for the Episcopalian faith and having killed her mental healing dog with caramels and finding surcease in a white poodle, she gave herself over to a riot of earth thoughts—together with language thereunto appertaining of so plain a texture that the Judge all but limped in his strut for several hours.

But when the strut did come back, and the mocking echoes of the strident tones of "his beautiful wife" were stilled by several rounds of Scotch whisky at the Club, the Judge went forth into the town, waving his hands right and left, bowing punctiliously to women, and spending an hour in police court getting out of trouble some of his gambler friends who had supported him in politics.

He told every one that it was good to be off the bench and to be "plain Tom Van Dorn" again, and he shook hands up and down Market Street. And as "plain Tom Van Dorn" he sat down in the shop of the Paris Millinery Company, Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., and talked to the amiable Prop. for half an hour—casting sly glances at the handsome Miss Morton, who got behind him and made faces over his back for Mrs. Herdicker's edification.

But as Mrs. Herdicker, Prop., made it a point—and kept it—never to talk against the cash drawer, "plain Tom Van Dorn" didn't learn the truth from her. So he pranced up and down before his scenic representation of Heaven in

the *Times*, and did not know that the whole town knew that his stage Heaven was the masque for as hot and cozy a little hell as any respectable gentleman of middle years could endure.

However clear he made it to the public, that he and Mrs. Van Dorn were passionately fond of each other; however evident he intended it to be that he was more than satisfied with the bargain that he had made when he took her, and put away his first wife; however strongly he played the card of the gallant husband and "dearied" her, and however she smirked at him and "dawlinged" him in public when the town was looking, every one knew the truth.

"We may," says the Peach Blow Philosopher in one of his dissertations on the Illusion of Time, "counterfeit everything in this world—but sincerity." So Judge Thomas Van Dorn—"plain Tom Van Dorn," went along Market Street, and through the world, handing out his leaden gratuities. But people felt how greasy they were, how heavy they were, how soft they were; and threw them aside, and sneered.

As for the Heaven which the Peach Blow Philosopher may have found for Henry Fenn and Violet Hogan, it was a different affair, but of slow and uncertain growth. Henry Fenn went into the sewer gang the day after he found Violet in the railroad yards, and for two weeks he worked ten hours a day with the negroes and Mexicans in the ditch. It took him a month to get enough money ahead to pay for a room. Leaving the sewer gang, he was made timekeeper on a small paving contract. But every day he sent through the mails to Violet enough to pay her rent and feed the children—a little sum, but all he could spare. He did not see her. He did not write to her. He only knew that the money he was making was keeping her out of the night, so he bent to his work with a will.

And at night,—it was not easy for Violet to stay in the house. She needed a thousand little things—or thought she did. And there was the old track and the easy money. But she knew what the pittance that came from Henry Fenn meant to him, so in pride and in shame one night she turned back home when she had slipped clear to the corner of the

street with her paint on. When she got home she threw herself upon the bed and wept like a child in anguish. But the next night she did not even touch the rouge pot, and avoided it as though it were a poison. Her idea was the sewing room. She wrote it all out, in her stylish, angular hand to Mr. Brotherton, told him what it would cost, and how she believed she could make expenses for herself and help a number of other women who, like her, were tempted to go the wrong road. She even sent him five spoons—the last relic of the old Mauling decency, five silver spoons dented with the tooth marks of the Mauling children, five spoons done up in pink tissue that she had always told little Ouida Hogan should come to her some day—she sent those spoons to Mr. Brotherton to sell to make the start toward the sewing room.

But Mr. Brotherton took the spoons to Mr. Ira Dooley's home of the fine arts and crafts, and then and there, mounting a lookout stand, addressed the crowd through the smoke in simple but effective language, showing the spoons, telling the boys at the gaming tables that they all knew Denny Hogan's wife and how about her; that she wanted to get in right; that the spoons were sent to him to sell to the highest and best bidder for cash in hand. He also said that chips would count at the market price, and lo! he got a hat full of rattly red and white and blue chips and jingly silver dollars and a wad of whispering five-dollar bills big enough to cork a cannon. He went back to Harvey, spoons and all, considering deeply certain statements that Grant Adams had made about the presence of the holy ghost in every human heart.

As for the bright particular Heaven of Mr. Fenn, as hereinbefore possibly hinted at by the Peach Blow Philosopher, these are its specifications:

Item One. Job as storekeeper at the railroad roundhouse, from which by specific order of the master mechanic two hours a day are granted to Mr. Fenn, to take his hat in his hand and go marching over the town, knocking at doors and soliciting sewing for women, and wood-sawing or yard or furnace work for men; but

Item Two. Being a generous man, Mr. Fenn is up before

eight for an hour of his work, and stays at it until seven, and thereby gets in two or three extra hours on the job, and feels

Item Three. That he is doing something worth while;

Item Four. Upon the first of the month he has nothing;

Item Five. Balancing his books at the last of the month he has nothing,

Item Six. And having no debt he is happy. But speaking of debt, there is

Item Seven. In Mr. Fenn's room a collection of receipts:

(a) One from the Midland Railroad Company for brass as per statement rendered.

(b) One from the Harvey Transfer Co. for one box of cutlery marked Wright & Perry, and

(c) One—the hardest receipt of all to get—from Martha Morton for six chickens as per account rendered. These receipts hang on a spindle in the little room. Under the spindle is

Item Eight. A bottle of whisky—full but uncorked. He is in his room but little. Sometimes he comes in late at night, and does not light the lamp to avoid seeing the bottle, but plunges into bed, and covers up his head in fear and trembling. On the day when the Peach Blow Philosopher printed his view on Heaven, Mr. Fenn, by way of personal adornment, had purchased of Wright & Perry

Item Nine. One new coat. He hoped and so indicated to the firm, to be able to afford a vest in the spring and perhaps trousers by summer, and because of the cutlery transaction above mentioned, the firm indicated

Item Ten. That Mr. Fenn's credit was good for the whole suit. But Mr. Fenn waved a proud hand and said he had

Item Eleven. No desire to become involved in the devious ways of high finance, and took only the coat.

But, nevertheless, no small part of his Heaven lies in the serene knowledge that the whole suit is waiting for him, carefully put aside by the head of the house until Mr. Fenn cares to call for it. That is perhaps a material Heaven but it is a part of Mr. Fenn's Heaven, and as he goes about from door to door soliciting for sewing, the knowledge that if he should cease or falter four women might be on the

street the next night, keeps him happy, and not even when he was county attorney or in the real estate business nor writing insurance, nor disporting himself as an auctioneer was Mr. Fenn ever in his own mind a person of so much use and consequence. So his Heaven needs no east wind to belly it out. Mr. Fenn's Heaven is full and fat and prosperous—even on two meals a day and in a three-dollar-a-month room.

And now that we may balance up the Heaven account in these books, we should come to some conclusion as to what Heaven is. Let us call it, for the sake of our hypothesis, the most work one can do for the least self-interest, and let it go at that and get on with the story. For this story has to do with large and real affairs. It must not dally here with the sordid affairs of a lady who certainly was no better than she should be and of a gentleman who was as the hereinbefore mentioned receipts will show, much worse than he might have been.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE OLD SPIDER BEGINS TO DIVIDE HIS FLIES WITH OTHERS AND GEORGE BROTHERTON IS PUZZLED TWICE IN ONE NIGHT

NOW it was in the year of these minor conquests when Henry Fenn and Violet Hogan were enjoying their little Heavens that great things began to stir in Harvey and the Wahoo Valley. In May a young gentleman in a high hat and a suit of exquisite gray twill cut with a long frock coat, appeared at the Hotel Sands—and took the bridal suite on the second floor. He brought letters to the Traders' Bank and from the Bank took letters to the smelters, and with a notebook in hand the young man in exquisite gray twill went about for three or four days smiling affably, and asking many questions. Then he left and in due course—that is to say, in a fortnight—Mr. Sands called the managing officials of all the smelters into his back room and read them a letter from a New York firm offering to trade stock in a holding company, taking over smelters of the class and kind in the Wahoo Valley for the stocks and bonds of the Harvey Smelters Company. The letterhead was so awe-inspiring and the proposition was so convincing by reason of the terror inherent in the letterhead that the smelters went into the holding company, and thereafter the managing officials who had been men of power and consequence in Harvey became clerks. About the same time the coal properties went the same way, and the cement concerns saw their finish as individual competing concerns. The glass factories were also gobbled up. So when the Fourth of July came and the youngest Miss Morton, under great protest, but at her father's stern command, wrapped an American flag about her—and sang the "Star Spangled Banner" to the Veterans of Persifer F. Smith Post of the G. A. R. in Sands'

Park, the land of the free and the home of the brave in Harvey was somewhat abridged.

Daniel Sands felt the abridgement more than any one else. For a generation he had been a spider, weaving his own web for his own nest. All his webs and filaments and wires and pipes and cables went out and brought back things for him to dispose of. He was the center of the universe for himself and for Harvey. He was the beginning and the end. His bank was the first and the last word in business and in politics in that great valley. What he spun was his; what he drew into the web was his. When he invited the fly into his parlor, it was for the delectation of the spider, not to be passed on to some other larger web and fatter spider. But that day as he sat, a withered, yellow-skinned, red-eyed, rattle-toothed, old man with a palsied head that never stopped wagging, as he sat under his skull cap, blinking out at a fat, little world that always had been his prey, Daniel Sands felt that he had ceased to be an end, and had become a means.

His bank, his mines, his smelters, even his municipal utilities, all were slipping from under his control. He could feel the pull of the rope from the outside around his own foot. He could feel that he was not a generator of power. He was merely a pumping station, gathering up all the fat of the little land that once was his, and passing it out in pipes that ran he knew not where, to go to some one else—he knew not whom. True, his commissions came back, and his dividends came back, and they were rich and sweet, and worth while. But—he was shocked when he found courage to ask it—if they did not come back, what could he do? He was part of a great web—a little filament in one obscure corner, and he was spinning a fabric whose faintest plan he could not conceive.

This angered him, and the spider spat in vain rage. The power he loved was gone; he was the mere shell of a spider; he was dead. Some man might come into the bank to-morrow and take even the semblance of his power from him. They might, indeed, shut up every mill, close every mine, lock every factory, douse the fire in every smelter in the Wahoo Valley, and the man who believed he had opened the mills, dug the mines, builded the factories and lighted the smelter

fires with all but his own hands, could only rage and fume, or be polite and pretend it was his desire.

The town that he believed that he had made out of sunshine and prairie grass, for all he could do, might be condemned as a bat roost, and the wires and cables, that ran from his desk all over the Wahoo Valley, might grow rusty and jangle in the prairie winds, while the pipes rotted under the sunflowers and he could only make a wry face. Spiders must have some instinctive constructive imagination to build their marvelous webs; surely this old spider had an imagination that in Elizabeth's day would have made him more than a minor poet. Yet in the beginning of the Twentieth Century he felt himself a bound prisoner in his decaying web. So he showed his blue mouth, and red eyelids in fury, and was silent lest even his shadow should find how impotent a thing he was.

But he knew that one man knew. "How about your politics down here?" asked the affable young man in exquisite gray twill, when he closed the gas-works deal. And Dan'l Sands said that until recently he and Dr. Nesbit had been cronies, but that some way the Doctor had been getting high notions, and hadn't been around the bank lately. The young man in the exquisite gray twill asked a few questions, catalogued the Doctor, and then said:

"This man Van Dorn, it appears, is local attorney for all the mines and smelters—he hasn't the reform bug, has he?"

The old spider grinned and shook his head.

"All right," said the polite young man in the exquisite gray twill, as he picked up his gray, high hat, and flicked a speck of dust from his exquisite gray frock coat, "I'll take matters of politics up with him."

So the spider knew that the servant had been put over the master, and again he opened his mouth in malice, but spoke no word.

And thus it was that Judge Thomas Van Dorn formed a strong New York connection that stood him in stead in after years. For the web that the old spider of Market Street had been weaving all these years, was at its strongest but a rope of sand compared with the steel links of the chain that was wrapped about the town, with one end in the Judge's

hand, but with the chain reaching out into some distant, mysterious hawser that moved it with a power of which even the Judge knew little or nothing.

So he was profoundly impressed, and accordingly proud, and added half an inch to the high-knee action of his strut. He felt himself a part of the world of affairs—and he was indeed a part. He was one of a thousand men who, whether they knew it or not, had been bought, body and soul—though the soul was thrown in for good measure in the Judge's case—to serve the great, greedy spider of organized capital at whatever cost of public welfare or of private faith. He was indeed a man of affairs—was Thomas Van Dorn—a part of a vast business and political cabal, that knew no party and no creed but dividends and still more dividends, impersonal, automatic, soulless—the materialization of the spirit of commerce.

And strangely enough, just as Tom Van Dorn worshiped the power that bought him, so the old spider, peering through the broken, rotting meshes of what was once his web, felt the power to which it was fastened, felt the power that moved him as a mere pawn in a game whose direction he did not conceive; and Dan'l Sands, in spite of his silent rage, worshiped the power like a groveling idolater.

But the worm never lacks for a bud; that also is a part of God's plan. Thus, while the forces of egoism, the powers of capital, were concentrating in a vast organization of socialized individualism, the other forces and powers of society which were pointing toward a socialized altruism, were forming also. There was the man in the exquisite gray twill, harnessing Judge Van Dorn and Market Street to his will; and there was Grant Adams in faded overalls, harnessing labor to other wheels that were grinding another grist. Slowly but persistently had Grant Adams been forming his Amalgamation of the Unions of the valley. Slowly and awkwardly his unwieldy machinery was creaking its way round. In spite of handicaps of opposing interests among the men of different unions, his Wahoo Valley Labor Council was shaping itself into an effective machine. If the shares of stock in the mills and the mines and the smelters all ran their dividends through one great hopper, so

the units of labor in the Valley were connected with a common source of direction. God does not plant the organizing spirit in the world for one group; it is the common heritage of the time. So the sinister power of organized capital loomed before Market Street with its terrible threat of extinction for the town if the town displeased organized capital; so also rose in the town a dread feeling of uneasiness that labor also had power. The personification of that power was Grant Adams. And when the young man in exquisite gray twill had become only a memory, Tom Van Dorn squarely faced Grant Adams. Market Street was behind the Judge. The Valley was back of Grant. For a time there was a truce, but it was not peace. The truce was a time of waiting; waiting and arming for battle.

During the year of the truce, Nathan Perry was busy. Nathan Perry saw the power that was organizing about him and the Independent mine among the employers in the district, and intuitively he felt the resistlessness of the power. But he did not shrink. He advised his owners to join the combination as a business proposition. But his advice was a dead fly fed to the old spider's senile vanity. For Daniel Sands had been able to dictate as a part of his acceptance of the proposition, this one concession: That the Independent mine be kept out of the agreement. Nathan Perry suspected this. But most of his owners were game men, and they decided not even to apply for admission to the organization. They found that the young man's management of the mine was paying well; that the labor problem was working satisfactorily; that the safety devices, while expensive, produced a feeling of good-will among the men that was worth more even in dividends than the interest on the money.

But after he had warned his employers of the wrath to come, Nathan Perry did not spend much time in unavailing regret at their decision. He was, upon the whole, glad they had made it. And having a serious problem in philology to work out—namely, to discover whether Esperanto, Chinese or Dutch is the natural language of man, through study of the conversational tendencies of Daniel Kyle Perry, the young superintendent of the Independent mine gave serious thought to that problem.

Then, of course, there was that other problem that bothered Nathan Perry, and being an engineer with a degree of B. S., it annoyed him to discover that the problem wouldn't come out straight. Briefly and popularly stated, it is this: If you have a boiler capacity of 200 pounds per square inch and love a girl 200 pounds to the square inch, and then the Doctor in his black bag brings one fat, sweaty, wrinkled baby, and you see the girl in a new and sweeter light than ever before, see her in a thousand ways rising above her former stature to a wonderful womanhood beyond even your dreams—how are you going to get more capacity out of that boiler without breaking it, when the load calls for four hundred pounds? Now these problems puzzled the young man, living at that time in his eight-room house with a bath, and he sat up nights to work them. And some times there were two heads at work on the sums, and once in a while three heads, but the third head talked a various language, whose mild and healing sympathy stole the puzzle from the problem and began chewing on it before they were aware. So Nathan put the troubles of the mine on the hook whereon he hung his coat at night, and if he felt uneasy at the trend of the day's events, his uneasiness did not come to him at home. He had heard it whispered about—once by the men and once in a directors' meeting—that the clash with Grant Adams was about to come. If Nathan had any serious wish in relation to the future, it was the ardent hope that the clash would come and come soon.

For the toll of death in the Wahoo Valley was cruel and inexorable. The mines, the factories, the railroads, the smelters, all were death traps, and the maimed, blind and helpless were cast out of the great industrial hopper like chaff. Every little neighborhood had its cripple. From the mines came the blind—whose sight was taken from them by cheap powder; from the railroad yards came the maimed—the handless, armless, legless men who, in their daily tasks had been crushed by inferior car couplings; the smelters sent out their sick, whom the fumes had poisoned, and sometimes there would come out a charred trunk that had gone into the great molten vats a man. The factories took hands and forearms, and sometimes when an accident of

unusual horror occurred in the Valley, it would seem like a place of mourning. The burden of all this bloodshed and death was upon the laborers. And more than that,—the burden of the widows and orphans also was upon labor. Capital charged off the broken machinery, the damaged buildings, the worn-out equipment to profit and loss with an easy conscience, while the broken men all over the Valley, the damaged laborers, the worn-out workers, who were thrown to the scrap heap in maturity, were charged to labor. And labor paid this bill, chiefly because capital was too greedy to provide safe machinery, or sanitary shops, or adequate tools!

Nathan Perry, first miner, then pit-boss and finally superintendent, and always member of Local Miners' Union No. 10, knew what the men were vaguely beginning to see and think. When some man who had been to court to collect damages for a killed or crippled friend, some man who had heard the Judge talk of the assumed risk of labor, some man who had heard lawyers split hairs to cheat working men of what common sense and common justice said was theirs, when some such man cried out in hatred and agony against society, Nathan Perry tried to counsel patience, tried to curb the malice. But in his heart Nathan Perry knew that if he had suffered the wrongs that such a man suffered, he too would be full of wrath and class hatred.

Sometimes, of course, men rose from the pit. Foremen became managers, managers became superintendents, superintendents became owners, owners became rich, and society replied—"Look, it is easy for a man to rise." Once at lunch time, sitting in the shaft house, Nathan Perry with his hands in his dinner bucket said something of the kind, when Tom Williams, the little Welsh miner, who was a disciple and friend of Grant Adams, cried:

"Yes—that's true. It is easy for a man to rise. It was easy for a slave to escape from the South—comparatively easy. But is it easy for the class to rise? Was it easy for the slaves to be free? That is the problem—the problem of lifting a whole class—as your class has been lifted, young fellow, in the last century. Why, over in Wales a century ago, a mere tradesman's son like you—was—was nobody.

The middle classes had nothing—that is, nothing much. They have risen. They rule the world now. This century must see the rise of the laboring class; not here and there as a man who gets out of our class and then sneers at us, and pretends he was with us by accident—but we must rise as a class, boy—don't you see?"

And so, working in the mine, with the men, Nathan Perry completed his education. He learned—had it ground into him by the hard master of daily toil—that while bread and butter is an individual problem that no laborer may neglect except at his peril, the larger problems of the conditions under which men labor—their hours of service, their factory surroundings, their shop rights to work, their relation to accidents and to the common diseases peculiar to any trade—those are not individual problems. They are class problems and must be solved—in so far as labor can solve them alone, not by individual struggle but by class struggle. So Nathan Perry came up out of the mines a believer in the union, and the closed shop. He felt that those who would make the class problem an individual problem, were only retarding the day of settlement, only hindering progress.

Rumor said that the truce in the Wahoo Valley was near an end. Nathan Perry did not shrink from it. But Market Street was uneasy. It seemed to be watching an approaching cyclone. When men knew that the owners were ready to stop the organization of unions, the cloud of unrest seemed to hover over them. But the clouds dissolved in rumor. Then they gathered again, and it was said that Grant Adams was to be gagged, his Sunday meetings abolished or that he was to be banished from the Valley. Again the clouds dissolved. Nothing happened. But the cloud was forever on the horizon, and Market Street was afraid. For Market Street—as a street—was chiefly interested in selling goods. It had, of course, vague yearnings for social justice—yearnings about as distinct as the desire to know if the moon was inhabited. But as a street, Market Street was with Mrs. Herdicker—it never talked against the cash drawer. Market Street, the world over, is interested in things as they are. The *statuo quo* is God and *laissez faire* is its profit! So

Market Street murmured, and buzzed—and then Market Street also organized to worship the god of things as they are.

But Mr. Brotherton of the Brotherton Book & Stationery Company held aloof from the Merchants' Protective Association. Mr. Brotherton at odd times, at first by way of diversion, and then as a matter of education for his growing business, had been glancing at the contents of his wares. Particularly had he been interested in the magazines. Moreover, he was talking. And because it helped him to sell goods to talk about them, he kept on talking.

About this time he affected flowing negligee bow ties, and let his thin, light hair go fluffy and he wrapped rather casually it seemed, about his elephantine bulk, a variety of loose, baggy garb, which looked like a circus tent. But he was a born salesman—was Mr. Brotherton. He plastered literature over Harvey in carload lots.

One day while Mr. Brotherton was wrapping up "Little Women" and a "Little Colonel" book and "Children of the Abbey" that Dr. Nesbit was buying for Lila Van Dorn, the Doctor piped, "Well, George, they say you're getting to be a regular anarchist—the way you're talking about conditions in the Valley?"

"Not for a minute," answered Mr. Brotherton. "Why, man, all I said was that if the old spider kept making the men use that cheap powder that blows their eyes out and their hands off, and their legs off, they ought to unionize and strike. And if it was my job to handle that powder I'd tie the old devil on a blast and blow him into hamburger." Mr. Brotherton's rising emotions reddened his forehead under his thin hair, and pulled at his wind. He shook a weary head and leaned on a show case. "But I say, stand by the boys. Maybe it will make a year of bad times or maybe two; but what of that? It'll make better times in the end."

"All right, George—go in. I glory in your spunk!" chirped the Doctor as he put Lila's package under his arm. "Let me tell you something," he added, "I've got a bill I'm going to push in the next legislature that will knock a hole in that doctrine of the assumed risk of labor, you can drive a horse through. It makes the owners pay for the accidents

of a trade, instead of hiding behind that theory, that a man assumes those risks when he takes a job."

The Doctor put his head to one side, cocked one eye and cried: "How would that go?"

"Now you're shoutin', Doc. Bust a machine, and the company pays for it. Bust a man, the man pays for it or his wife and children or his friends or the county. That's not fair. A man's as much of a part of the cost of production as a machine!"

The Doctor toddled out, clicking his cane and whistling a merry tune and left Mr. Brotherton enjoying his maiden meditations upon the injustices of this world. In the midst of his meditations he found that he had been listening for five minutes to Captain Morton. The Captain was expounding some passing dream about his Household Horse. Apparently the motor car, which was multiplying rapidly in Harvey, had impressed him. He was telling Mr. Brotherton that his Household Horse, if harnessed to the motor car, would save much of the power wasted by the chains. He was dreaming of the distant day when motor cars would be used in sufficient numbers to make it profitable for the Captain to equip them with his power saving device.

But Mr. Brotherton cut into the Captain's musings with: "You tell the girls to wash the cat for I'm coming out tonight."

"Girls?—huh—girls?" replied the Captain as he looked over his spectacles at Mr. Brotherton. " 'Y gory, man, what's the matter with me—eh? I'm staying out there on Elm Street yet—what say?" And he went out smiling.

When the Captain entered the house, he found Emma getting supper, Martha setting the table and Ruth, with a candy box before her at the piano, going over her everlasting "Ah-ah-ah-ah-ahs" from "C to C" as Emma called it.

Emma took her father's hat, put it away and said: "Well, father—what's the news?"

"Well," replied the Captain, with some show of deliberation, "a friend of mine down town told me to tell you girls to wash the cat for he'll be along here about eight o'clock."

"Mr. Brotherton," scoffed Ruth. "It's up to you two," she cried gayly in the midst of her eternal journey from

"C" to "C." "He never wears his Odd Fellows' pin unless he's been singing at an Odd Fellows' funeral, so that lets me out to-night."

"Well," sighed Emma, "I don't know that I want him even if he has on his Shriner's pin. I just believe I'll go to bed. The way I feel to-night I'm so sick of children I believe I wouldn't marry the best man on earth."

"Oh, well, of course, Emma," suggested the handsome Miss Morton, "if you feel that way about it why, I—"

"Now Martha—" cried the elder sister, "can't you let me alone and get out of here? I tell you, the superintendent and the principal and the janitor and the dratted Calvin kid all broke loose to-day and I'm liable to run out doors and begin to jump and down in the street and scream if you start on me."

But after supper the three Misses Morton went upstairs, and did what they could to wipe away the cares of a long and weary day. They put on their second best dresses—all but Emma, who put on her best, saying she had nothing else that wasn't full of chalk and worry. At seven forty-five, they had the parlor illuminated. As for the pictures and bric-a-brac—to-wit, a hammered brass flower pot near the grate, and sitting on an onyx stand a picture of Richard Harding Davis, the contribution of the eldest Miss Morton's callow youth, also a brass smoking set on a mission table, the contribution of the youngest Miss Morton from her first choir money—as for the pictures and bric-a-brac, they were dusted until they glistened, and the trap was all set, waiting for the prey.

They heard the gate click and the youngest Miss Morton said quickly: "Well, if he's an Odd Fellow, I guess I'll take him. But," she sighed, "I'll bet a cooky he's an Elk and Martha gets him."

The Captain went to the door and brought in the victim to as sweet and demure a trio of surprised young women and as patient a cat, as ever sat beside a rat hole. After he had greeted the girls—it was Ruth who took his coat, and Martha his hat, but Emma who held his hand a second the longest, after she spied the Shriner's pin—Mr. Brotherton picked up the cat.

"Well, Epaminondas," he puffed as he stroked the animal and put it to his cheek, "did they take his dear little kitties away from him—the horrid things."

This was Mr. Brotherton's standard joke. Ruth said she never felt the meeting was really opened until he had teased them about Epaminondas' pretended kittens.

For the first hour the talk ranged with obvious punctility over a variety of subjects—but never once did Mr. Brotherton approach the subject of politics, which would hold the Captain for a night session. Instead, Mr. Brotherton spun literary tales from the shop. Then the Captain broke in and enlivened the company with a description of Tom Van Dorn's new automobile, and went into such details as to cams and cogs and levers and other mechanical fittings that every one yawned and the cat stretched himself, and the Captain incidentally told the company that he had got Van Dorn's permission to try the Household Horse on the old machine before it went in on the trade.

Then Ruth rose. "Why, Ruth, dear," said Emma sweetly, "where are you going?"

"Just to get a drink, dear," replied Ruth.

But it took her all night to finish drinking and she did not return. Martha rose, began straightening up the littered music on the piano, and being near the door, slipped out. By this time the Captain was doing most of the talking. Chiefly, he was telling what he thought the sprocket needed to make it work upon an automobile. At the hall door of the dining room two heads appeared, and though the door creaked about the time the clock struck the half hour, Mr. Brotherton did not see the heads. They were behind him, and four arms began making signs at the Captain. He looked at them, puzzled and anxious for a minute or two. They were peremptorily beckoning him out. Finally, it came to him, and he said to the girls: "Oh, yes —all right." This broke at the wrong time into something Mr. Brotherton was saying. He looked up astonished and the Captain, abashed, smiled and after shuffling his feet, backed up to the base burner and hummed the tune about the land that was fairer than day. Emma and Mr. Brotherton began talking. Presently, the Captain picked up the

spitting cat by the scruff of the neck and held him a moment under his chin. "Well, Emmy," he cut in, interrupting her story of how Miss Carhart had told the principal if "he ever told of her engagement before school was out in June, she'd just die," with:

"I suppose there'll be plenty of potatoes for the hash?"

And not waiting for answer, he marched to the kitchen with the cat, and in due time, they heard the "Sweet Bye and Bye" going up the back stairs, and then the thump, thump of the Captain's shoes on the floor above them.

The eldest Miss Morton, in her best silk dress, with her mother's cameo brooch at her throat, and with the full, maidenly ripeness of twenty-nine years upon her brow, with her hair demurely parted on said brow, where there was the faintest hint of a wrinkle coming—which Miss Morton attributed to a person she called "the dratted Calvin kid,"—the eldest Miss Morton, nair, cameo, silk dress, wrinkle, the dratted Calvin kid and all, did or did not look like a siren, according to the point of view of the spectator. If he was seeking the voluptuous curves of the early spring of youth—no: but if he was seeking those quieter and more restful lines that follow a maiden with a true and tender heart, who is a good cook and who sweeps under the sofa, yes.

Mr. Brotherton did not know exactly what he desired. He had been coming to the Morton home on various errands since the girls were little tots. He had seen Emma in her first millinery store hat. He had bought Martha her first sled; he had got Ruth her last doll. But he shook his head. He liked them all. And then, as though to puzzle him more, he had noticed that for two or three years, he had never got more than two consecutive evenings with any of them—or with all of them. The mystery of their conduct baffled him. He sometimes wondered indignantly why they worked him in shifts? Sometimes he had Ruth twice; sometimes Emma and Martha in succession—sometimes Martha twice. He like them all. But he could not understand what system they followed in disposing of him. So as he sat and toyed with his Shriner's pin and listened to the tales of a tepid schoolmistress' romance that Emma told, he wondered if

after all—for a man of his tastes, she wasn't really the flower of the flock.

"You know, George," she was old enough for that, and at rare times when they were alone she called him George, "I'm working up a kind of sorrow for Judge Van Dorn—or pity or something. When I taught little Lila he was always sending her candy and little trinkets. Now Lila is in the grade above me, and do you know the Judge has taken to walking by the schoolhouse at recess, just to see her, and walking along at noon and at night to get a word with her. He has put up a swing and a teeter-totter board on the girls' playgrounds. This morning I saw him standing, gazing after her, and he was as sad a figure as I ever saw. He caught me looking at him and smiled and said:

"'Fine girl, Emma,' and walked away."

"Lord, Emma," said Mr. Brotherton, as he brought his big, baseball hands down on his fat knees. "I don't blame him. Don't you just think children are about the nicest things in this world?"

Emma was silent. She had expressed other sentiments too recently. Still she smiled. And he went on:

"Oh, wow!—they're mighty fine to have around."

But Mr. Brotherton was restless after that, and when the clock was striking ten he was in the hall. He left as he had gone for a dozen years. And the young woman stood watching him through the glass of the door, a big, strong, handsome man—who strode down the walk with clicking heels of pride, and she turned away sadly and hurried upstairs.

"Martha," she asked, as she took down her hair, "was it ordained in the beginning of the world that all school teachers would have to take widowers?"

And without hearing the answer, she put out the light.

Mr. Brotherton, stalking—not altogether unconsciously down the walk, turned into the street and as he went down the hill, he was aware that a boy was overtaking him. He let the boy catch up with him. "Oh, Mr. Brotherton," cried the boy, "I've been looking for you!"

"Well, here I am; what's the trouble?"

"Grant sent me," returned the boy, "to ask you if he

could see you at eight o'clock to-morrow morning at the store?"

Brotherton looked the boy over and exclaimed:

"Grant?" and then, "Oh—why, Kenyon, I didn't know you. You are certainly that human bean-stalk, son. Let's take a look at you. Well, say—" Mr. Brotherton stopped and backed up and paused for dramatic effect. Then he exploded: "Say, boy, if I had you in an olive wood frame, I could get $2.75 or $3.00 for you as Narcissus or a boy Adonis! You surely are the angel child!"

The boy's great black eyes shone up at the man with something wistful and dream-like in them that only his large, sensitive mouth seemed to comprehend. For the rest of the child's face was boy—boy in early adolescence. The boy answered simply:

"Grant said to tell you that he expects the break to-morrow and is anxious to see you."

Mr. Brotherton looked at the boy again—the eyes haunted the man—he could not place them, yet they were familiar to him.

"Where you been, kid?" he asked. "I thought you were in Boston, studying."

"It's vacation, sir," answered Kenyon.

Brotherton pulled the lad up under the next corner electric lamp and again gazed at him. Then Mr. Brotherton remembered where he had seen the eyes. The second Mrs. Van Dorn had them. This bothered the man.

The eyes of the boy that flashed so brightly into Mr. Brotherton's eyes, certainly puzzled him and startled him. But not so much as the news the boy carried. For then Mr. Brotherton knew that Market Street would be buzzing in the morning and that the cyclone clouds that were lowering, soon would break into storm.

CHAPTER XXXVI

A LONG CHAPTER BUT A BUSY ONE, IN WHICH KENYON ADAMS AND HIS MOTHER HAVE A STRANGE MEETING, AND LILA VAN DORN TAKES A NIGHT RIDE

THE next morning at eight o'clock, Grant Adams came hurrying into Brotherton's store. As he strode down the long store room, Brotherton thought that Grant in his street clothes looked less of a person than Grant in his overalls. But the big man rose like a frisky mountain in earthquake and called:

"Hello there, Danton—going to shake down the furnace fires of revolution this morning, I understand."

Grant stared at Brotherton. Solemnly he said, as he stood an awkward moment before sitting. "Well, Mr. Brotherton, the time has come, when I must fight. To-day is the day!"

"Yes," replied Brotherton, "I heard a few minutes ago that they were going to run you out of the district to-day. The meeting in the Commercial Club rooms is being called now."

"Yes," said Grant, "and I've been asked to appear before them."

"I guess they are going to try and bluff you out, Grant," said Brotherton.

"I got wind of it last night," said Grant, "when they nailed up the last hall in the Valley against me. One after another of the public halls has been closed to me during the past year. But to-day is to be our first public rally of the delegates of the Wahoo Valley Trades Council. We have rented office rooms in the second floor of the Vanderbilt House in South Harvey, and are coming out openly as an established labor organization, ready for business in the Valley, and we are going to have a big meeting—somewhere —I don't know where now, but somewhere—" his face turned grim and a fanatic flame lighted his eyes as he spoke.

"Somewhere the delegates of the Council will meet to-night, and I shall talk to them—or—"

"Soh, boss—soh, boss—don't get excited," counseled Mr. Brotherton. "They'll blow off a little steam in the meeting this morning, and then you go on about your business."

"But you don't know what I know, George Brotherton," protested Grant as he leaned forward. "I have converted enough spies—oh, no—not counting the spies who were converted merely to scare me—but enough real spies to know that they mean business!" He stopped, and sitting back in his chair again, he said grimly, "And so do I—I shall talk to the men to-night, or—"

"All right, son; you'll talk or 'the boy, oh, where was he?' I'll tell you what," cried Mr. Brotherton; "you'll fool around with the buzz saw till you'll get killed. Now, look here, Grant—I'm for your revolution, and six buckets of blood. But you can't afford to lose 'em! You're dead right about the chains of slavery and all that sort of thing, but don't get too excited about it. You live down there alone with your father and he is talking to spooks, and you're talking to yourself; and you've got a kind of ingrown idea of this thing. Give the Lord a little time, and he'll work out this pizen in our social system. I'll help you, and maybe before long Doc'll see the light and help you; but now you need a regulator. You ought to have a wife and about six children to hook you up to the ordinary course of nature! And see here, Grant," Mr. Brotherton dropped a weighty hand on Grant's shoulder, "if you don't be careful you'll furnish the ingredients of a public funeral, and where will your revolution be then—and the boys in the Valley and your father and Kenyon?"

While Brotherton was speaking, Grant sat with an impassive face. But when Kenyon's name was uttered he looked up quickly and answered:

"That is why I am here this morning; it's about Kenyon. George Brotherton, that boy is more than life to me." The fanatic light was gone from Grant's eyes, and the soft glow in them revealed a man that George Brotherton had not seen in years. "Mr. Brotherton," continued Grant, "father is getting too old to do much for Kenyon. The Nesbits have

borne practically all the expense of educating him. But the Doctor won't always be here." Again he hesitated. Then he went ahead as if he had decided for the last time. "George Brotherton, if I should be snuffed out, I want you to look after Kenyon—if ever he needs it. You have no one, and—" Grant leaned forward and grasped Brotherton's great hands and cried, "George Brotherton, if you knew the gold in that boy's heart, and what he can do with a violin, and how his soul is unfolding under the spell of his music. He's so dumb and tongue-tied and unformed now; and yet—"

"Well—say!" It came out of Mr. Brotherton with a crash like a falling tree, "Grant—well, say! Through sickness and health, for better or for worse, till death do us part—if that will satisfy you." He put his big paw over and grabbed Grant's steel hook and jerked him to his feet. "You've sure sold Kenyon into bondage. When I saw him last night—honest to God, man—I thought I'd run into a picture roaming around out of stock without a frame! Him and me together can do Ariel and Prospero without a scratch of make-up." Grant beamed, but when Brotherton exclaimed as an afterthought, "Say, man, what about that boy's eyes?" Grant's features mantled and the old grim look overcast his face, as Brotherton went on: "Why, them eyes would make a madonna's look like fried eggs! Where did he get 'em—they're not Sands and they're not Adams. He must take back to some Peri that blew into Massachusetts from an enchanted isle." Brotherton saw that he was annoying Grant in some way. Often he realized that his language was not producing the desired effect; so he veered about and said gently, "You're not in any danger, Grant; but so long as I'm wearing clothes that button up the front —don't worry about Kenyon, I'll look after him."

Five minutes later, Grant was standing in the front door of Brotherton's store, gazing into Market Street. He saw Daniel Sands and Kyle Perry and Tom Van Dorn walking out of one store and into the next. He saw John Kollander in a new blue soldier uniform stalking through the street. He saw the merchants gathering in small, volatile groups that kept forming and re-forming, and he knew that Mr. Brotherton's classic language was approximately correct

when he said there was a hen on. Grant eyed the crowd that was hurrying past him to the meeting like a hungry hound watching a drove of chickens. Finally, when Grant saw that the last straggler was in the hall, he turned and stalked heavily to the Commercial Club rooms, yet he moved with the self-consciousness of one urged by a great purpose. His head was bent in reflection. His hand held his claw behind him, and his shoulders stooped. He knew his goal, but the way was hard and uncertain, and he realized the peril of a strategic misstep at the outset. Heavily he mounted the steps to the hall, entered, and took a seat in the rear. He sat with his head bowed and his gaze on the floor. He was aware that Judge Van Dorn was speaking; but what the Judge was saying did not interest Grant. His mind seemed aloof from the proceedings. Suddenly what he had prepared to say slipped out of his consciousness completely, as he heard the Judge declare, "We deem this, sir, a life and death struggle for our individual liberties; a life and death struggle for our social order; a life and death struggle for our continuance to exist as individuals." There was a long repetition of the terms "life and death." They appealed to some tin-pan rhythmic sense in the Judge's oratorical mind. But the phrase struck fire in Grant Adams's heart. Life and death, life and death, rang through his soul like a clamor of bells. "We have given our all," bellowed the Judge, "to make this Valley an industrial hive, where labor may find employment—all of our savings, all of our heritage of Anglo-Saxon organizing skill, and we view this life and death struggle for its perpetuity—" But all Grant Adams heard of that sentence was "life and death," as the great bell of his soul clanged its alarm. "We are a happy, industrial family," intoned the Judge, the suave Judge, who was something more than owner; who was Authority without responsibility, who was the voice of the absentee master; the voice, it seemed to Grant, of an enchanted peacock squawking in the garden of a dream; the voice that cried: "and to him who would overthrow all this contentment, all this admirable adjustment of industrial equilibrium we offer the life and death alternative that is given to him who would violate a peaceful home."

But all that Grant Adams sensed of his doom in the Judge's pronouncement was the combat of death with life. Life and death were meeting for their eternal struggle, and as the words resounded again and again in the Judge's oratory, there rushed into Grant Adams's mind the phrase, "I am the resurrection and the life," and he knew that in the life and death struggle for progress, for justice, for a more abundant life on this planet, it would be finally life and not death that would win.

As he sat blindly glaring at the floor, there may have stolen into his being some ember from the strange flame burning about our earth, whose touch makes men mad with the madness that men have, who come from the wildernesses of life, from the lowly walks and waste places—the madness of those who feed on locusts and wild honey; who, like St. Francis and Savonarola, go forth on hopeless quests for the unattainable ideal, or like John Brown, who burn in the scorching flame all the wisdom of the schools and the courts, and for one glorious day shine forth with their burning lives a beacon by which the world is lighted to its own sad shame.

Grant never remembered what he said by way of introduction as he stood staring at the crowd. It was a different crowd from audiences he knew. To Grant it was the market place; merchants, professional men; clerks, bankers,—well-dressed men, with pale, upturned faces stretched before him to the rear of the hall. It was all black and white, and as his soul cried "life and death" back of his conscious speech, the image came to him that all these pale, black-clad figures were in their shrouds, and that he was talking to the visible body of death—laid out stiffly before him.

What answer he made to Van Dorn does not matter. Grant Adams could not recall it when he had finished. But ever as he spoke through his being throbbed the electrical beat of the words, "I am the resurrection and the life." And he was exultant in the consciousness that in the struggle of "life and death," life would surely win. So he stood and spoke with a tongue of flame.

"If you have given all—and you have, we also have given all. But our all is more vitally our all—than yours; for

it is our bodies, our food and clothing; our comfortable homes; our children's education, our wives' strength; our babies' heritage; many of us have indeed given our sons' integrity and our daughters' virtue. All these we have put into the bargain with you. We have put them into the common hopper of this industrial life, and you have taken the grain and we the chaff. It is indeed a life and death struggle. And this happy family, this well-balanced industrial adjustment, this hell of labor run through your mills like grist, this is death; death is the name for all your wicked system, that shrinks and cringes before God's ancient justice. 'I am the resurrection and the life' was not spoken across the veil that rises from the grave. It was spoken for men here in the flesh who shall soon come into a more abundant life. Life and death, life and death are struggling here this very hour, and you—you," he leaned forward shaking his steel claw in their faces, "you and your greedy system of capital are the doomed; you are death's embodiment."

Then came the outburst. All over the house rose cries. Men jumped from their chairs and waved their arms. But Judge Van Dorn quieted them. He knew that to attack Grant Adams physically at that meeting would inflame the man's followers in the Valley. So he pounded the gavel for quiet. To Adams he thundered, "Sit down, you villain!" Still the crowd hissed and jeered. A great six-footer in new blue overalls, whom Grant knew as one of the recent spies, one of the sluggers sent to the Valley, came crowding to the front of the room. But Judge Van Dorn nodded him back. When the Judge had stilled the tumult, he said in his sternest judicial manner, "Now, Adams—we have heard enough of you. Leave this district. Get out of this Valley. You have threatened us; we shall not protect you in life or limb. You are given two hours to leave the Valley, and after that you stay here at your own peril. If you try to hold your labor council, don't ask us, whom you have scorned, to surround you with the protection of the society you would overthrow in bloodshed. Now, go—get out of here," he cried, with all the fire and fury that an outraged respectability could muster. But Grant, turning, twisted his

hook in the Judge's coat, held him at arm's length, and leaning toward the crowd, with the Judge all but dangling from his steel arm, cried: "I shall speak in South Harvey to-night. This is indeed a life and death struggle, and I shall preach the gospel of life. Life," he cried with a trumpet voice, "life—the life of society, and its eternal resurrection out of the forces of life that flow from the everlasting divine spring!"

After the crowd had left the hall, Grant hurried toward the street leading to South Harvey. As he turned the corner, the man whom Grant had seen in the hall met him, the man whom Grant recognized as a puddler in one of the smelters. He came up, touched Grant on the shoulder and asked:

"Adams?" Grant nodded.

"Are you going down to South Harvey?"

Grant replied, "Yes, I'm going to hold a meeting there to-night."

"Well, if you try," said the man, pushing his face close to Grant's, "you'll get your head knocked off—that's all. We don't like your kind—understand?" Grant looked at the man, took his measure physically and returned:

"All right, there'll be some one around to pick it up—maybe!"

The man walked away, but turned to say:

"Mind now—you show up in South Harvey, and we'll fix you right!"

As Grant turned to board a South Harvey car, Judge Van Dorn caught his arm, and said:

"Wait a minute, the next car will do."

The Judge's wife was with him, and Grant was shocked to see how doll-like her face had become, how the lines of character had been smoothed out, the eyelids stained, the eyebrows penciled, the lips colored, until she had a bisque look that made him shudder. He had seen faces like hers, and fancied that he knew their story.

"I would like to speak with you just a minute. Come up to the office. Margaret, dearie," said Van Dorn, "you wait for me at Brotherton's." In the office, Van Dorn squared himself before Grant and said:

"It's no use, sir. You can't hold a meeting there to-night—the thing's set against you. I can't stop them, but I know the rough element there will kill you if you try. You've done your best—why risk your head, man—for no purpose? You can't make it—and it's dangerous for you to try."

Grant looked at Van Dorn. Then he asked:

"You represent the Harvey Fuel Company, Judge?"

"Yes," replied the Judge with much pride of authority, "and we—"

Grant stopped him. "Judge," he said, "if you blow your horn—I'll ring my bell and— If I don't hold my meeting to-night, your mines won't open to-morrow morning." The Judge rose and led the way to the door.

"Oh, well," he sneered, "if you won't take advice, there's no need of wasting time on you."

"No," answered Grant, "only remember what I've said."

When Grant alighted from the car in South Harvey, he found his puddler friend waiting for him. The two went into the Vanderbilt House, where Grant greeted Mrs. Williams, the landlady, as an old friend, and the puddler cried: "Say, lady—if you keep this man—we'll burn your house."

"Well, burn it—it wouldn't be much loss," retorted the landlady, who turned her back upon the puddler and said to Grant: "We've given you the front room upstairs, Grant, for the committee. It has the outside staircase. Your room is ready. You know the Local No. 10 boys from the Independent are all coming around this afternoon—as soon as they learn where the meeting is."

The puddler walked away and Grant went out into the street; looked up at the wooden structure with the stairway rising from the sidewalk and splitting the house in two. Mounting the stairs, he found a narrow hall, leading down a long line of bedrooms. He realized that he must view his location as a general looks over a battlefield.

The closing of the public halls to Grant and his cause had not discouraged him. He knew that he still had the great free out-of-doors, and he had thought that an open air meeting would give the cause dramatic setting. He felt that to be barred from the halls of the Valley helped rather than

hurt his meeting. The barring proved to the workers the righteousness of their demands. So Grant sallied forth to locate a vacant lot; he shot out of his room full of the force of his enthusiasm, but his force met another force as strong as his, and ruthless. God's free out of doors, known and beloved of Grant from his boyhood, was preëmpted: What he found in his quest for a meeting place was a large red sign, "No trespassing," upon the nearest vacant lot, and a special policeman parading back and forth in front of the lot on the sidewalk. He found a score of lots similarly placarded and patrolled. He sent men to Magnus and Foley scurrying like ants through the Valley, but no lot was available.

Up town in Harvey, the ants also were busy. The company was sending men over Market Street, picking out the few individuals who owned vacant lots, leasing them for the month and preparing to justify the placarding and patrolling that already had been done. One of the ants that went hurrying out of the Sands hill on this errand, was John Kollander, and after he had seen Wright & Perry and the few other merchants who owned South Harvey real estate, he encountered Captain Ezra Morton, who happened to have a vacant lot, given to the Captain in the first flush of the South Harvey boom, in return for some service to Daniel Sands. John Kollander explained his errand to the Captain, who nodded wisely, and stroked his goatee meditatively.

"I got to think it over," he bawled, and walked away, leaving John Kollander puzzled and dismayed. But Captain Morton spent no time in academic debate. In half an hour he was in South Harvey, climbing the stairs of the Vanderbilt House, and knocking at Grant Adams's door. Throwing open the door Grant found Captain Morton, standing to attention with a shotgun in his hands. The Captain marched in, turned a square corner to a chair, but slumped into it with a relieved sigh.

"Well, Grant—I heard your speech this morning to the Merchants' Association. You're crazy as a bed bug—eh? That's what I told 'em all. And then they said to let you go to it—you couldn't get a hall, and the company could keep you off the lots all over the Valley, and if you tried to speak

on the streets they'd run you in—what say?" His old eyes snapped with some virility, and he lifted up his voice and cried:

"Eot 'y gory—is that the way to do a man, I says? No—why, that ain't free speech! I remember when they done Garrison and Lovejoy and those old boys that way before the war. I fit, bled and died for that, Grant—eh? And I says to the girls this noon: 'Girls—your pa's got a lot in South Harvey, over there next to the Red Dog saloon, that he got way back when they were cheap, and now that the company's got all their buildings up and don't want to buy any lots—why, they're cheaper still—what say?'

"And 'y gory, I says to the girls—'If your ma was living I know what she'd say. She'd say, "You just go over there and tell that Adams boy that lot's hisn, and if any one tries to molest him, you blow 'em to hell"—that's what your ma'd say'—only words to that effect—eh? And so by the jumping John Rogers, Grant—here I am!"

He looked at the shotgun. "One load's bird shot—real fine and soft, with a small charge of powder." He put his hand to his mouth sheepishly and added apologetically, "I suppose I won't need it,—but I just put the blamedest load of buck shot and powder in that right barrel you ever saw—what say?"

Grant said: "Well, Captain—this isn't your fight. You don't believe in what I'm talking about—you've proved your patriotism in a great war. Don't get into this, Captain."

"Grant Adams," barked the Captain as if he were drilling his company, "I believe if you're not a Socialist, you're just as bad. But 'y gory, I fought for the right of free speech, and free meetings, and Socialist or no Socialist, that's your right. I'm going to defend you on my own lot." He rose again, straightened up in rheumatic pain, marched to the door, saluted, and said:

"I brought my supper along with me. It's in my coat pocket. I'm going over to the lot and sit there till you come. I know this class of people down here. They ain't worth hell room, Grant," admonished the Captain earnestly. "But if I'm not there, the company will crowd their men in on that lot as sure as guns, when they know you are to meet there.

And I'm going there to guard it till you come. Good day—sir."

And with that he thumped limpingly down the narrow stairs, across the little landing, out of the door and into the street.

Grant stood at the top of the stairs and watched him out of sight. Then Grant pulled himself together, and went out to see the gathering members of the Labor Council in the hotel office and the men of Local No. 10 to announce the place of meeting. Later in the afternoon he met Nathan Perry. When he told Nathan of the meeting, the young man cried in his rasping Yankee voice:

"Good—you're no piker. They said they had scared the filling out of you at the meeting this morning, and they've bragged they were going to beat you up this afternoon and kill you to-night. You look pretty husky—but watch out. They really are greatly excited."

"Well," replied Grant grimly, "I'll be there to-night."

"Nevertheless," returned Nathan, snapping off his words as though he was cutting them with steel scissors, "Anne and I agreed to-day, that I must come to Mrs. Williams's and take you to the meeting. They may get ugly after dark."

Half an hour later on the street, Grant was passing his cousin Anne, wheeling Daniel Kyle Perry out to take the air. He checked his hurried step when he caught her smile and said, "Well, Anne, Nate told me that you wish to send him over to the meeting to-night, as my body guard. I don't need a body guard, and you keep Nate at home." He smiled down on his cousin and for a moment all of the emotional storm in his face was melted by the gentleness of that smile. "Anne," he said—"what a brick you are!"

She laughed and gave him the full voltage of her joyous eyes and answered:

"Grant, I'd rather be the widow of a man who would stand by you and what you are doing, than to be the wife of a man who shrank from it." She lowered her voice, "And Grant, here's a curious thing: this second Mrs. Van Dorn called me up on the phone a little bit ago, and said she knew you and I were cousins and that you and Nate were such friends, but would I tell Nate to keep you away from any

meeting to-night? She said she couldn't tell me, but she had just learned some perfectly awful things they were going to do, and she didn't want to see any trouble. Wasn't that queer?"

Grant shook his head. "Well, what did you say?" he asked.

"Oh, I said that while they were doing such perfectly awful things to you, your friends wouldn't be making lace doilies! And she rang off. What do you think of it?" she asked.

"Just throwing a scare into me—under orders," responded the man and hurried on.

When Grant returned to the hotel at supper time, he found Mr. Brotherton sitting in a ramshackle rocking chair in the upstairs bedroom, waiting.

"I thought I'd come over and bring a couple of friends," explained Mr. Brotherton, pointing to the corner, where two shotguns leaned against the wall.

"Why, man," exclaimed Grant, "that's good of you, but in all the time I've been in the work of organization, I've never carried a gun, nor had one around. I don't want a gun, Mr. Brotherton."

"I do," returned the elder man, "and I'm here to say that moral force is a grand thing, but in these latitudes when you poke Betsy Jane under the nose of an erring comrade, he sees the truth with much more clearness than otherwise. I stick to the gun—and you can go in hard for moral suasion.

"Also," he added, "I've just taken a survey of these premises, and told the missus to bring the supper up here. There may be an early curtain raiser on this entertainment, and if they are going to chase you out of town to-night, I want a good seat at the performance." He grinned. "Nate Perry will join us in a little quiet social manslaughter. I called him up an hour ago, and he said he'd be here at six-thirty. I think he's coming now." In another minute the slim Yankee figure of Nathan was in the room. It was scarcely dusk outside. Mrs. Williams came up with a tray of food. As she set it down she said:

"There's a crowd around at the Hot Dog, you can see them through the window."

Nate and Grant looked. Mr. Brotherton went into the supper. "Crowd all right," assented Nate. There was no mistaking the crowd and its intention. There were new men from the day shift at the smelter, imported by the company to oppose the unions. A thousand such men had been brought into the district within a few months.

"There's another saloon across the road here," said Mr. Brotherton, looking up from his food. "My understanding is that they're going to make headquarters across the street in Dick's Place. You know I got a pipe-line in on the enemy through the Calvin girl. She gets it at home, and her father gets it at the office. Our estimable natty little friend Joe will be down here—he says to keep the peace. That's what he tells at home. I know what he's coming for. Tom Van Dorn will sit in the back room of that saloon and no one will know he's there, and Joseph will issue Tom's orders. Lord," cried Mr. Brotherton, waving a triangle of pie in his hand, "don't I know 'em like a book."

While he was talking the crowd slowly was swelling in front of the Hot Dog saloon. It was a drinking and noisy crowd. Men who appeared to be leaders were taking other men in to the bar, treating them, then bringing them out again, and talking excitedly to them. The crowd grew rapidly, and the noise multiplied. Another crowd was gathering—just a knot of men down the street by the Company's store, in the opposite direction from the Hot Dog crowd. Grant and Nate noticed the second crowd at the same time. It was Local No. 10. Grant left the window and lighted the lamp. He wrote on a piece of paper, a few lines, handed it to Nathan, saying:

"Here, sign it with me." It read:

"Boys—whatever you do, don't start anything—of any kind—no matter what happens to us. We can take care of ourselves."

Nathan Perry signed it, slipped down the stairs into the hall, and beckoned to his men at the Company's store. The crowd at the Hot Dog saw him and yelled, but Evan Evans came running for the note and took it back. Little Tom Williams came up the stairs with Nathan, saying:

"Well—they're getting ready for business. I brought a

gun up to No. 3 this afternoon. I'm with Grant in this."

The little landlord went into No. 3, appeared with a rifle, and came bobbing into the room.

Grant at the window could see the crowd marching from the Hot Dog to Dick's Place, yelling and cursing as it went. The group in the bedroom over the street opened the street windows to see better and hear better. An incandescent over the door of the saloon lighted the narrow street. In front of the saloon and under the light the mob halted. The men in the room with Grant were at the windows watching. Suddenly—as by some prearranged order, four men with revolvers in their hands ran across the street towards the hotel. Brotherton, Williams and Perry ran to the head of the stairs, guns in hand. Grant followed them. There they stood when the door below was thrown open, and the four men below rushed across the small landing to the bottom of the stairs. It was dark in the upper hall, but a light from the street flooded the lower hall. The men below did not look up; they were on the stairs.

"Stop," shouted Brotherton with his great voice.

That halted them. They looked up into darkness. They could see no faces—only four gun barrels. The men farthest up the stairs literally fell into the arms of those below. Then the four men below scrambled down the stairs as Mr. Brotherton roared:

"I'll kill the first man who puts his foot on the bottom step again."

With a cry of terror they rushed out. The crowd at the Company store hooted, and the mob before the saloon jeered. But the four men scurried across the street, and told the crowd what had happened. For a few minutes no move was made. Then Grant, who had left the hallway and was looking through the window, saw the little figure of Joseph Calvin moving officiously among the men. He went into the saloon, and came out again after a time. Then Grant cried to Brotherton at the head of the stairs:

"Watch out—they're coming; more of them this time." And half a dozen armed men rushed across the street and appeared at the door of the hallway.

"Stop," yelled Brotherton—whose great voice itself

sounded a terrifying alarm in the darkened hallway. The feet of two men were on the first steps of the stairs—they looked up and saw three gun barrels pointing down at them, and heard Brotherton call "one—two—three," but before he could say "fire" the men fell back panic stricken and ran out of the place.

The crowd left the sidewalk and moved into the saloon, and the street was deserted for a time. Local No. 10 held its post down by the Company Store. It seemed like an age to the men at the head of the stairs. Yet Mr. Brotherton's easy running fire of ribaldry never stopped. He was excited and language came from his throat without restraint.

Then Grant's quick ear caught a sound that made him shudder. It was far away, a shrill high note; in a few seconds the note was repeated, and with it the animal cry one never mistakes who hears it—the cry of an angry mob. They could hear it roaring over the bridge upon the Wahoo and they knew it was the mob from Magnus, Plain Valley and Foley coming. On it came, with its high-keyed horror growing louder and louder. It turned into the street and came roaring and whining down to the meeting place at the saloon. It filled the street. Then appeared Mr. Calvin following a saloon porter, who was rolling a whiskey barrel from the saloon. The porter knocked in the head, and threw tin cups to the crowd.

"What do you think of that for a praying Christian?" snarled Mr. Brotherton. No one answered Mr. Brotherton, for the whiskey soon began to make the crowd noisy. But the leaders waited for the whiskey to make the crowd brave. The next moment, Van Dorn's automobile—the old one, not the new one—came chugging up. Grant, at the window, looked out and turned deathly sick. For he saw the puddler who had bullied him during the day get out of the car, and in the puddler's grasp was Kenyon—with white face, but not whimpering.

The men made way for the puddler, who hurried the boy into the saloon. Grant did not speak, but stood unnerved and horror-stricken staring at the saloon door which had swallowed up the boy.

"Well, for God—" cried Brotherton.

"A screen—they're going to use the boy as a shield—the damn cowards!" rasped Nathan Perry.

The little Welshman moaned. And the three men stood staring at Grant whose eyes did not shift from the saloon door. He was rigid and his face, which trembled for a moment, set like molten bronze.

"If I surrender now, if they beat me here with anything less than my death, the whole work of years is gone—the long struggle of these men for their rights." He spoke not to his companions, but through them to himself. "I can't give up—not even for Kenyon," he cried. "Tom—Tom," Grant turned to the little Welshman. "You stood by and heard Dick Bowman order Mugs to hold the shovel over my face! Did he shrink? Well, this cause is the life and death struggle of all the Dicks in the Valley—not for just this week, but for always."

Below the crowd was hushed. Joe Calvin had appeared and was giving orders in a low tone. The hulking figure of the puddler could be seen picking out his men; he had three set off in a squad. The men in the room could see the big beads of sweat stand out on Grant's forehead. "Kenyon—Kenyon," he cried in agony. Then George Brotherton let out his bellow, "Grant—look here—do you think I'm going to fire on—"

But the next minute the group at the window saw something that made even George Brotherton's bull voice stop. Into the drab street below flashed something all red. It was the Van Dorn motor car, the new one. But the red of the car was subdued beside the scarlet of the woman in the back seat—a woman without hat or coat, holding something in her arms. The men at the window could not see what those saw in the street; but they could see Joe Calvin fall back; could see the consternation on his face, could see him waving his hands to the crowd to clear the way. And then those at the window above saw Margaret Van Dorn rise in the car and they heard her call, "Joe Calvin! Joe Calvin—" she screamed, "bring my husband out from behind that wine room door—quick—quick," she shrieked, "quick, I say."

The mob parted for her. The men at the hotel window could not see what she had in her arms. She made the

driver wheel, drive to the opposite side of the street directly under the hotel window—directly in front of the besieged door. In another instant Van Dorn, ghastly with rage, came bareheaded out of the saloon. He ran across the street crying:

"You she devil, what do you—"

But he stopped without finishing his sentence. The men above looked down at what he was looking at and saw a child—Tom Van Dorn's child, Lila, in the car.

"My God, Margaret—what does this mean?" he almost whispered in terror.

"It means," returned the strident voice of the woman, "that when you sent for your car and the driver told me he was going to Adamses—I knew why—from what you said, and now, by God," she screamed, "give me that boy—or this girl goes to the union men as their shield."

Van Dorn did not speak. His mouth seemed about to begin, but she stopped him, crying:

"And if you touch her I'll kill you both. And the child goes first."

The woman had lost control of her voice. She swung a pistol toward the child.

"Give me that boy!" she shrieked, and Van Dorn, dumb and amazed, stood staring at her. "Tell them to bring that boy before I count five: One, two," she shouted, "three—"

"Oh, Joe," called Van Dorn as his whole body began to tremble, "bring the Adams boy quick—here!" His voice broke into a shriek with nervous agitation and the word "here" was uttered with a piercing yell, that made the crowd wince.

Calvin brought Kenyon out and sent him across the street. Grant opened a window and called out: "Get into the car with Lila, Kenyon—please."

The woman in the car cried: "Grant, Grant, is that you up there? They were going to murder the boy, Grant. Do you want his child up there?"

She looked up and the arc light before the hotel revealed her tragic, shattered face—a wreck of a face, crumpled and all out of line and focus as the flickering glare of the arc-light fell upon it. "Shall I send you his child?" she babbled

hysterically, keeping the revolver pointed at Lila—"His child that he's silly about?"

Van Dorn started for her car, but Brotherton at the window bellowed across a gun sight: "Move an inch and I'll shoot."

Grant called down: "Margaret, take Lila and Kenyon home, please."

Then, with Mr. Brotherton's gun covering the father in the street below, the driver of the car turned it carefully through the parting crowd, and was gone as mysteriously and as quickly as he came.

"Now," cried Mr. Brotherton, still sighting down the gun barrel pointed at Van Dorn, standing alone in the middle of the street, "you make tracks, and don't you go to that saloon either—you go home to the bosom of your family. Stop," roared Mr. Brotherton, as the man tried to break into a run. Van Dorn stopped. "Go down to the Company store where the union men are," commanded Mr. Brotherton. "They will take you home.

"Hey—you Local No. 10," howled the great bull voice of Brotherton. "You fellows take this man home to his own vine and fig tree."

Van Dorn, looking ever behind him for help that did not come, edged down the street and into the arms of Local No. 10, and was swallowed up in that crowd. A rock from across the street crashed through the window where the gun barrels were protruding, but there was no fire in return. Another rock and another came. But there was no firing.

Grant, who knew something of mobs, felt instinctively that the trouble was over. Nathan and Brotherton agreed. They stood for a time—a long time it seemed to them—guarding the stairs. Then some one struck a match and looked at his watch. It was half past eight. It was too late for Grant to hold his meeting. But he felt strongly that the exit of Van Dorn had left the crowd without a leader and that the fight of the night was won.

"Well," said Grant, drawing a deep breath. "They'll not run me out of town to-night. I could go to the lot now and hold the meeting; but it's late and it will be better to

wait until to-morrow night. They should sleep this off—I'm going to talk to them."

He stepped to an iron balcony outside the window and putting his hands to his mouth uttered a long horn-like blast. The men saw him across the street. "Come over here, all of you—" he called. "I want to talk to you—just a minute."

The crowd moved, first one or two, then three or four, then by tens. Soon the crowd stood below looking up half curiously—half angrily.

"You see, men," he smiled as he shoved his hand in his pocket, and put his head humorously on one side:

"We are more hospitable when you all come than when you send your delegations. It's more democratic this way—just to kind of meet out here like a big family and talk it over. Some way," he laughed, "your delegates were in a hurry to go back and report. Well, now, that was right. That is true representative government. You sent 'em, they came; were satisfied and went back and told you all about it." The crowd laughed. He knew when they laughed that he could talk on. "But you see, I believe in democratic government. I want you all to come and talk this matter over—not just a few."

He paused; then began again: "Now, men, it's late. I've got so much to say I don't want to begin now. I don't like to have Tom Van Dorn and Joe Calvin divide time with me. I want the whole evening to myself. And," he leaned over clicking his iron claw on the balcony railing while his jaw showed the play of muscles in the light from below, "what's more I'm going to have it, if it takes all summer. Now then," he cried: "The Labor Council of the Wahoo Valley will hold its meeting to-morrow night at seven-thirty sharp on Captain Morton's vacant lot just the other side of the Hot Dog saloon. I'll talk to that meeting. I want you to come to that meeting and hear what we have to say about what we are trying to do."

A few men clapped their hands. Grant Adams turned back into the room and in due course the crowd slowly dissolved. At ten o'clock he was standing in the door of the

Vanderbilt House looking at his watch, ready to turn in for the night. Suddenly he remembered the Captain. He hurried around to the Hot Dog, and there peering into the darkness of the vacant lot saw the Captain with his gun on his shoulder pacing back and forth, a silent, faithful sentry, unrelieved from duty.

When Grant had relieved him and told him that the trouble was over, the little old man looked up with his snappy eyes and his dried, weazened smile and said: " 'Y gory, man—I'm glad you come. I was just a-thinking I bet them girls of mine haven't cooked any potatoes to go with the meat to make hash for breakfast—eh? and I'm strong for hash."

CHAPTER XXXVII

IN WHICH WE WITNESS A CEREMONY IN THE TEMPLE OF LOVE

GEORGE BROTHERTON took the Captain to the street car that night. They rode face to face and all that the Captain had seen and more, outside the Vanderbilt House, and all that George Brotherton had seen within its portals, a street car load of Harvey people heard with much "'Y gorying" and "Well—saying," as the car rattled through the fields and into Market Street. Amiable satisfaction with the night's work beamed in the moonface of Mr. Brotherton and the Captain was drunk with martial spirit. He shouldered his gun and marched down the full length of the car and off, dragging Brotherton at his chariot wheels like a spoil of battle.

"Come on, George," called the Captain as the audience in the car smiled. "Young man, I need you to tell the girls that their pa ain't gone stark, staring mad—eh? And I want to show 'em a hero!—What say? A genuine hee-ro!"

It was half an hour after the Captain bursting upon his hearthstone like a martial sky rocket, had exploded the last of his blue and green candles. The three girls, sitting around the cold base burner, beside and above which Mr. Brotherton stood in statuesque repose, heard the Captain's tale and the protests of Mr. Brotherton much as Desdemona heard of Othello's perils. And when the story was finished and retold and refinished and the Captain was rising with what the girls called the hash-look in his snappy little eyes, Martha saw Ruth swallow a vast yawn and Martha turned to Emma an appreciative smile at Ruth's discomfiture.

But Emma's eyes were fixed upon Mr. Brotherton and her face turned toward him with an aspect of tender adoration. Mr. Brotherton, who was not without appreciation of his own heroic caste, saw the yawn and the smile and then he saw the face of Emma Morton.

It came over him in a flash of surprise that Ruth and Martha were young things, not of his world; and that Emma was of his world and very much for him in his world. It got to him through the busy guard of his outer consciousness with a great rush of tenderness that Emma really cared for the dangers he had faced and was proud of the part he had played. And Mr. Brotherton knew that, with Ruth and Martha, it was a tale that was told.

As he saw her standing among her sisters, his heart hid from him the little school teacher with crow's feet at her eyes, but revealed instead the glowing heart of an exalted woman, who did not realize that she was uncovering her love, a woman who in the story she had heard was living for a moment in high romance. Her beloved, imperiled, was restored to her; the lost was found and the journey which ends so happily in lovers' meetings was closing.

His eyes filled and his voice needed a cough to prime it. The fire, glowing in Emma Morton's eyes, steamed up George Brotherton's will—the will which had sent him crashing forward in life from a train peddler to a purveyor of literature and the arts in Harvey. Deeds followed impulses with him swiftly, so in an instant the floor of the Morton cottage was shaking under his tread and with rash indifference, high and heroic, ignoring with equal disdain two tittering girls, an astonished little old man and a cold base burner, the big man stalked across the room and cried:

"Well, say—why, Emma—my dear!" He had her hands in his and was putting his arm about her as he bellowed: "Girls—" his voice broke under its heavy emotional load. "Why, dammit all, I'm your long-lost brother George! Cap, kick me, kick me—me the prize jackass—the grand sweepstake prize all these years!"

"No, no, George," protested the wriggling maiden. "Not—not here! Not—"

"Don't you 'no—no' me, Emmy Morton," roared the big man, pulling her to his side. "Girl—girl, what do we care?" He gave her a resounding kiss and gazed proudly around and exclaimed, "Ruthie, run and call up the *Times* and give 'em the news. Martha, call up old man Adams—and I'll take a bell to-morrow and go calling it up and down

Market Street. Then, Cap, you tell Mrs. Herdicker. This is the big news." As he spoke he was gathering the amazed Ruth and Martha under his wing and kissing them, crying, "Take that one for luck—and that to grow on." Then he let out his laugh. But in vain did Emma Morton try to squirm from his grasp; in vain she tried to quiet his clatter. "Say, girls, cluster around Brother George's knee—or knees—and let's plan the wedding."

"You are going to have a wedding, aren't you, Emma?" burst in Ruth, and George cut in:

"Wedding—why, this is to be the big show—the laughing show, all the wonders of the world and marvels of the deep under one canvas. Why, girls—"

"Well, Emma, you've just got to wear a veil," laughed Martha hysterically.

"Veil nothing—shame on you, Martha Morton. Why, George hasn't asked—"

"Now ain't it the truth!" roared Brotherton. "Why veil! Veil?" he exclaimed. "She's going to wear seven veils and forty flower girls—forty—count 'em—forty! And Morty Sands best man—"

"Keep still, George," interrupted Ruth. "Now, Emma, when—when, I say, are you going to resign your school?"

Mr. Brotherton gave the youngest and most practical Miss Morton a look of quick intelligence. "Don't you fret; Ruthie, I'm hog tied by the silken skein of love. She's going to resign her school to-morrow."

"Indeed I am not, George Brotherton—and if you people don't hush—"

But Mr. Brotherton interrupted the bride-to-be, incidentally kissing her by way of punctuation, and boomed on in his poster tone, "Morty Sands best man with his gym class from South Harvey doing ground and lofty tumbling up and down the aisles in pink tights. Doc Jim in linen pants whistling the Wedding March to Kenyon Adams's violin obligato, with the General hitting the bones at the organ! The greatest show on earth and the baby elephant in evening clothes prancing down the aisle like the behemoth of holy writ! Well, say—say, I tell you!"

The Captain touched the big man on the shoulder apolo-

getically. "George, of course, if you could wait a year till the Household Horse gets going good, I could stake you for a trip to the Grand Canyon myself, but just now, 'y gory, man!"

"Grand Canyon!" laughed Brotherton. "Why, Cap, we're going to go seven times around the world and twice to the moon before we turn up in Harvey. Grand Canyon—"

"Well, at least, father," cried Martha, "we'll get her that tan traveling dress and hat she's always wanted."

"But I tell you girls to keep still," protested the bride-to-be, still in the prospective groom's arms and proud as Punch of her position. "Why, George hasn't even asked me and—"

"Neither have you asked me, Emma, ' 'eathen idol made of mud what she called the Great God Buhd.' " He stooped over tenderly and when his face rose, he said softly, "And a plucky lot she cared for tan traveling dresses when I kissed her where she stud!" And then and there before the Morton family assembled, he kissed his sweetheart again, a middle-aged man unashamed in his joy.

It was a tremendous event in the Morton family and the Captain felt his responsibility heavily. The excited girls, half-shocked and half-amused and wholly delighted, tried to lead the Captain away and leave the lovers alone after George had hugged them all around and kissed them again for luck. But the Captain refused to be led. He had many things to say. He had to impress upon Mr. Brotherton, now that he was about to enter the family, the great fact that the Mortons were about to come into riches. Hence a dissertation on the Household Horse and its growing popularity among makers of automobiles; Nate Perry's plans in blue print for the new factory were brought in, and a wilderness of detail spread before an ardent lover, keen for his first hour alone with the woman who had touched his bachelor heart. A hundred speeches came to his lips and dissolved —first formal and ardent love vows—while the Captain rattled on recounting familiar details of his dream.

Then Ruth and Martha rose in their might and literally dragged their father from the room and upstairs. Half an

hour later the two lovers in the doorway heard a stir in the house behind them. They heard the Captain cry:

"The hash—George, she's the best girl—'Y gory, the best girl in the world. But she will forget to chop the hash over night!"

As George Brotherton, bumping his head upon the eternal stars, turned into the street, he saw the great black hulk of the Van Dorn house among the trees. He smiled as he wondered how the ceremonies were proceeding in the Temple of Love that night.

It was not a ceremony fit for smiles, but rather for the tears of gods and men, that the priest and priestess had performed. Margaret Van Dorn had taken Kenyon home, then dropped Lila at the Nesbit door as she returned from South Harvey. When she found that her husband had not reached home, she ran to her room to fortify herself for the meeting with him. And she found her fortifications in the farthest corner of the bottom drawer of her dresser. From its hiding place she brought forth a little black box and from the box a brown pellet. This fortification had been her refuge for over a year when the stress of life in the Temple of Love was about to overcome her. It gave her courage, quickened her wits and loosened her tongue. Always she retired to her fortress when the combat in the Temple threatened to strain her nerves. So she had worn a beaten path of habit to her refuge.

Then she made herself presentable; took care of her hair, smoothed her face at the mirror and behind the shield of the drug she waited. She heard the old car rattling up the street, and braced herself for the struggle. She knew—she had learned by bitter experience that the first blow in a rough and tumble was half the battle. As he came raging through the door, slamming it behind him, she faced him, and before he could speak, she sneered:

"Ah, you coward—you sneaking, cur coward—who would murder a child to win—Ach!" she cried. "You are loathsome—get away from me!"

The furious man rushed toward her with his hands clinched. She stood with her arms akimbo and said slowly:

"You try that—just try that."

He stopped. She came over and rubbed her body against his, purring, with a pause after each word:

"You are a coward—aren't you?"

She put her fingers under his jaw, and sneered, "If ever you lay hands on me—just one finger on me, Tom Van Dorn—" She did not finish her sentence.

The man uttered a shrill, insane cry of fury and whirled and would have run, but she caught him, and with a gross physical power, that he knew and dreaded, she swung him by force into a chair.

"Now," she panted, "sit down like a man and tell me what you are going to do about it? Look up—dawling!" she cried, as Van Dorn slumped in the chair.

The man gave her a look of hate. His eyes, that showed his soul, burned with rage and from his face, so mobile and expressive, a devil of malice gaped impotently at his wife, as he sat, a heap of weak vanity, before her. He pulled himself up and exclaimed:

"Well, there's one thing damn sure, I'll not live with you any more—no man would respect me if I did after to-night."

"And no man," she smiled and said in her mocking voice, "will respect you if you leave me. How Laura's friends will laugh when you go, and say that Tom Van Dorn simply can't live with any one. How the Nesbit crowd will titter when you leave me, and say Tom Van Dorn got just what he had coming! Why—go on—leave me—if you dare! You know you don't dare to. It's for better or worse, Tom, until death do us part—dawling!"

She laughed and winked indecently at him.

"I will leave you, I tell you, I will leave you," he burst forth, half rising. "All the devils of hell can't keep me here."

"Except just this one," she mocked. "Oh, you might leave me and go with your present mistress! By the way, who is our latest conquest—dawling? I'm sure that would be fine. Wouldn't they cackle—the dear old hens whose claws scratch your heart so every day?" She leaned over, caressing him devilishly, and cried, "For you know when you get *loose* from me, you'll pretty nearly have to marry the other

lady—wouldn't that be nice? 'Through sickness and health, for good or for ill,'—isn't it nice?" she scoffed. Then she turned on him savagely, "So you will try to hide behind a child, and use him for a shield—Oh, you cur—you despicable dog," she scorned. Then she drew herself up and spoke in a passion that all but hissed at him. "I tell you, Tom Van Dorn, if you ever, in this row that's coming, harm a hair of that boy's head—you'll carry the scar of that hair to your grave. I mean it."

Van Dorn sprang up. He cried: "What business is it of yours? You she devil, what's the boy to you? Can't I run my own business? Why do you care so much for the Adams brat? Answer me, I tell you—answer me," he cried, his wrath filling his voice.

"Oh, nothing, dawling," she made a wicked, obscene eye at him, and simpered: "Oh, nothing, Tom—only you see I might be his mother!"

She played with the vulgar diamonds that hid her fingers and looked down coyly as she smiled into his gray face.

"Great God," he whispered, "were you born a—" he stopped, ashamed of the word in his mouth.

The woman kept twinkling her indecent eyes at him and put her head on one side as she replied: "Whatever I am, I'm the wife of Judge Van Dorn; so I'm quite respectable now—whatever I was once. Isn't that lawvly, dawling!" She began talking in her baby manner.

Her husband was staring at her with doubt and fear and weak, footless wrath playing like scurrying clouds across his proud, shamed face.

"Oh, Margaret, tell me the truth," he moaned, as the fear of the truth baffled him—a thousand little incidents that had attracted his notice and passed to be stirred up by a puzzled consciousness came rushing into his memory—and the doubt and dread overcame even his hate for a moment and he begged. But she laughed, and scouted the idea and then called out in anguish:

"Why—why have you a child to love—to love and live for even if you cannot be with her—why can I have none?"

Her voice had broken and she felt she was losing her grip

on herself, and she knew that her time was limited, that her fortifications were about to crumble. She sat down before her husband.

"Tom," she said coldly, "no matter why I'm fond of Kenyon Adams—that's my business; Lila is your business, and I don't interfere, do I? Well," she said, looking the man in the eyes with a hard, mean, significant stare, "you let the boy alone—do you understand? Do what you please with Grant or Jasper or the old man; but Kenyon—hands off!"

She rose, slipped quickly to the stairway, and as she ran up she called, "Good night, dawling." Before he was on his feet he heard the lock click in her door, and with a horrible doubt, an impotent rage, and a mantling shame stifling him, he went upstairs and from her distant room she heard the bolt click in the door of his room. And behind the bolted doors stood two ghosts—the ghosts of rejected children, calling across the years, while the smudge of the extinguished torch of life choked two angry hearts.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

GRANT ADAMS VISITS THE SONS OF ESAU

"MY dear," quoth the Doctor to his daughter as he sat poking his feet with his cane in her little office at the Kindergarten, after they had discussed Lila's adventure of the night before, "I saw Tom up town this morning and he didn't seem to be exactly happy. I says, 'Tom, I hear you beat God at his own game last night!' and," the Doctor chuckled, "Laura, do you know, he wouldn't speak to me!" As he laughed, the daughter interrupted:

"Why, father—that was mean—"

"Of course it was mean. Why—considering everything, I'd lick a man if he'd talk that mean to me. But my Eenjiany devil kind of got control of my forbearing Christian spirit and I cut loose."

The daughter smiled, then she sighed, and asked: "Father—tell me, why did that woman object to Tom's use of Kenyon in the riot last night?"

Doctor Nesbit opened his mouth as if to answer her. Then he smiled and said, "Don't ask me, child. She's a bad egg!"

"Lila says," continued the daughter, "that Margaret appears at every public place where Kenyon plays. She seems eager to talk to him about his accomplishments, and has a sort of fascinated interest in whatever he does, as nearly as I can understand it? Why, father? What do you suppose it is? I asked Grant, who was here this morning with a Croatian baby whose mother is in the glass works, and Grant only shook his head." The father looked at his daughter over his glasses and asked:

"Croatians, eh? That's what the new colony is down in Magnus. Well, we've got Letts and Lithuanians and why

not Croatians? What a mix we have here in the Valley! I wouldn't wash 'em for 'em!"

"Well, father, I would. And when you get the dirt off they're mostly just folks—just Indiany, as you call it. They all take my flower seeds. And they all love bright colors in their windows. And they are spreading the glow of blooms across the district, just as well as the Germans and the French and the Belgians and the Irish. And they are here for exactly the same thing which we are here for, father. We're all in the same game."

He looked at her blankly, and ventured, "Money?"

"No—you stupid. You know better. It's children. They're here for their children—to lift their children out of poverty. It's the children who carry the banner of civilization, the hope of progress, the real sunrise. These people are all confused and more or less dumb and loggy about everything else in life but this one thing; they all hope greatly for their children. For their children they joyfully endure the hardships of poverty; the injustice of it; to live here in these conditions that seem to us awful, and to work terrible hours that their children may rise out of the worse condition that they left in Europe. And they have left Europe, father, spiritually as well as physically. Here they are reborn into America. The first generation may seem foreign, may hold foreign ways—on the outside. But these American born boys and girls, they are American—as much as we are, with all their foreign names. They are of our spirit. When America calls they will hear and follow. Whatever blood they will shed will be real American blood, because as children, born under the same aspiring genius for freedom under which we were born, as children they became Americans. Oh, father, it's for the children that these people here in Harvey—these exploited people everywhere in this country,—plant the flowers and brighten up their homes. It's for their children that they are going with Grant to organize for better things. The fire of life runs ahead of us in hope for our children, and if we haven't children or the love of them in our hearts—why, father, that's what's *eating Tom's* heart out, and blasting this miserable woman's *life! Grant* said to-day: 'This baby here symbolizes all

that I stand for, all that I hope to do, all that the race dreams!"

The Doctor had lighted his pipe, and was puffing meditatively. He liked to hear his daughter talk. He took little stock in what she said. But when she asked him for help—he gave it to her unstinted, but often with a large, tolerant disbelief in the wisdom of her request. As she paused he turned to her quickly, "Laura—tell me, what do you make out of Grant?"

He eyed her sharply as she replied: "Father, Grant is a lonely soul without chick or child, and I'm sorry for him. He goes—"

"Well, now, Laura," piped the little man, "don't be too sorry. Sorrow is a dangerous emotion."

The daughter turned her face to her father frankly and said: "I realize that, father. Don't concern yourself about that. But I see Grant some way, eating the locusts and wild honey in the wilderness, calling out to a stiff-necked generation to repent. His eyes are focussed on to-morrow. He expects an immediate millennium. But he is at least looking forward, not back. And the world back of us is so full of change, that I am sure the world before us also must be full of change, and maybe sometime we shall arrive at Grant's goal. He's not working for himself, either in fame or in power, or in any personal thing. He's just following the light as it is given him to see it, here among the poor."

The daughter lifted a face full of enthusiasm to her father. He puffed in silence. "Well, my dear, that's a fine speech. But when I asked you about Grant I was rising to a sort of question of personal privilege. I thought perhaps I would mix around at his meeting to-night! If you think I should, just kind of stand around to give him countenance—and," he chuckled and squeaked: "To bundle up a few votes!"

"Do, father—do—you must!"

"Well," squeaked the little voice, "so long as I must I'm glad to know that Tom made it easy for me, by turning all of Harvey and the Valley over to Grant at the riot last night. Why, if Tom tried to stop Grant's meeting to-night Market Street itself would mob Tom—mob the very Temple of Love." The Doctor chuckled and returned to his own

affairs. "Being on the winning side isn't really important. But it's like carrying a potato in your pocket for rheumatism: it gives a feller confidence. And after all, the devil's rich and God's poor have all got votes. And votes count!" He grinned and revived his pipe.

He was about to speak again when Laura interrupted him, "Oh, father—they're not God's poor, whose ever they are. Don't say that. They're Daniel Sands's poor, and the Smelter Trust's poor, and the Coal Trust's poor, and the Glass and Cement and Steel company's poor. I've learned that down here. Why, if the employers would only treat the workers as fairly as they treat the machines, keeping them fit, and modern and bright, God would have no poor!"

The Doctor rose and stretched and smiled indulgently at his daughter. "Heigh-ho the green holly," he droned. "Well, have it your way. God's poor or Dan's poor, they're my votes, if I can get 'em. So we'll come to the meeting tonight and blow a few mouthfuls on the fires of revolution, for the good of the order!"

He would have gone, but his daughter begged him to stay and dine with her in South Harvey, before they went to the meeting. So for an hour the Doctor sat in his daughter's office by the window, sometimes giving attention to the drab flood of humanity passing along the street as the shifts changed for evening in the mines and smelters, and then listening to the day's stragglers who came and went through his daughter's office: A father for medicine for a child, a mother for advice, a breaker boy for a book, a little girl from the glass works for a bright bit of sewing upon which she was working, a woman from Violet Hogan's room with a heartbreak in her problem, a group of women from little Italy with a complaint about a disorderly neighbor in their tenement, a cripple from the mines to talk over his career, whether it should be pencils or shoe strings, or a hand organ, or some attempt at handicraft; the head of a local labor union paying some pittance to Laura, voted by the men to help her with her work; a shy foreign woman with a badly spelled note from her neighbor, asking for flower seeds and directions translated by Laura into the woman's own language telling how to plant the seeds; a belated working

mother calling for the last little tot in the nursery and explaining her delay. Laura heard them all and so far as she could, she served them all. The Doctor was vastly proud of the effective way in which she dispatched her work.

It was six o'clock, but the summer sun still was high and the traffic in the street was thick. For a time, while a woman with a child with shriveled legs was talking to Laura about the child's education, the Doctor sat gazing into the street. When the room was empty, he exclaimed, "It's a long weary way from the sunshine and prairie grass, child! How it all has changed with the years! Ten years ago I knew 'em all, the men and the employers. Now they are all newcomers—men and masters. Why, I don't even know their nationalities; I don't even know what part of the earth they come from. And such sad-faced droves of them; so many little scamps, underfed, badly housed for generations. The big, strapping Irish and Germans and Scotch and the wide-chested little Welshmen, and the agile French—how few of them there are compared with this slow-moving horde of runts from God knows where! It's been a long time since I've been down here to see a shift change, Laura. Lord—Lord have mercy on these people—for no one else seems to care!"

"Amen, and Amen, father," answered the daughter. "These are the people that Grant is trying to stir to consciousness. These are the people who—"

"Well, yes," he turned a sardonic look upon his daughter, "they're the boys who voted against me the last time because Tom and Dan hired a man in every precinct to spread the story that I was a teetotaler, and that your mother gave a party on Good Friday—and all because Tom and Dan were mad at me for pushing that workingmen's compensation bill! But now I look at 'em—I don't blame 'em! What do they know about workingmen's compensation!" The Doctor stopped and chuckled; then he burst out: "I tell you, Laura, when a man gets enough sense to stand by his friends—he no longer needs friends. When these people get wise enough not to be fooled by Tom and old Dan, they won't need Grant! In the meantime—just look at 'em—look at 'em paying twice as much for rent as they pay up town:

gouged at the company stores down here for their food and clothing; held up by loan sharks when they borrow money; doped with aloes in their beer, and fusil oil in their whiskey, wrapped up in shoddy clothes and paper shoes, having their pockets picked by weighing frauds at the mines, and their bodies mashed in speed-up devices in the mills; stabled in filthy shacks without water or sewers or electricity which we uptown people demand and get for the same money that they pay for these hog-pens—why, hell's afire and the cows are out —Laura! by Godfrey's diamonds, if I lived down here I'd get me some frisky dynamite and blow the whole place into kindling." He sat blinking his indignation; then began to smile. "Instead of which," he squeaked, "I shall endeavor by my winning ways to get their votes." He waved a gay hand and added, "And with God be the rest!"

Towering above a group of workers from the South of Europe—a delegation from the new wire mill in Plain Valley, Grant Adams came swinging down the street, a Gulliver among his Lilliputians. Although it was not even twilight, it was evident to the Doctor that something more than the changing shifts in the mills was thickening the crowds in the street. Little groups were forming at the corners, good-natured groups who seemed to know that they were not to be molested. And the Doctor at his window watched Grant passing group after group, receiving its unconscious homage; just a look, or a waving hand, or an affectionate, half-abashed little cheer, or the turning of a group of heads all one way to catch Grant's eyes as he passed.

At the Captain's vacant lot, Grant rose before a cheering throng that filled the lot, and overflowed the sidewalk and crowded far down the street. Two flickering torches flared at his head. An electric in front of the Hot Dog and a big arc-light over the door of the smelter lighted the upturned faces of the multitude. When the crowd had ceased cheering, Grant, looking into as many eyes of his hearers as he could catch, began:

"I have come to talk to Esau—the disinherited—to Esau who has forfeited his birthright. I am here to speak to *those* who are toiling in the world's rough work unrequited —*I am here*, one of the poor to talk to the poor."

His voice held back so much of his strength, his gaunt, awkward figure under the uncertain torches, his wide, impassioned gestures, with the carpenter's nail claw always before his hearers, made him a strange kind of specter in the night. Yet the simplicity of his manner and the directness of his appeal went to the hearts of his hearers. The first part of his message was one of peace. He told the workers that every inch they gained they lost when they tried to overcome cunning with force. "The dynamiter tears the ground from under labor—not from under capital; he strengthens capital," said Grant. "Every time I hear of a bomb exploding in a strike, or of a scab being killed I think of the long, hard march back that organized labor must make to retrieve its lost ground. And then," he cried passionately, and the mad fanatic glare lighted his face, "my soul revolts at the iniquity of those who, by craft and cunning while we work, teach us the false doctrine of the strength of force, and then when we use what they have taught us, point us out in scorn as lawbreakers. Whether they pay cash to the man who touched the fuse or fired the gun or whether they merely taught us to use bombs and guns by the example of their own lawlessness, theirs is the sin, and ours the punishment. Esau still has lost his birthright—still is disinherited."

He spoke for a time upon the aims of organization, and set forth the doctrine of class solidarity. He told labor that in its ranks altruism, neighborly kindness that is the surest basis of progress, has a thousand disintegrated expressions. "The kindness of the poor to the poor, if expressed in terms of money, would pay the National debt over night," he said, and, letting out his voice, and releasing his strength, he begged the men and women who work and sweat at their work to give that altruism some form and direction, to put it into harness—to form it into ranks, drilled for usefulness. Then he spoke of the day when class consciousness would not be needed, when the unions would have served their mission, when the class wrong that makes the class suffering and thus marks the class line, would disappear just as they have disappeared in the classes that have risen during the last two centuries.

"Oh, Esau," he cried in the voice that men called insane because of its intensity, "your birthright is not gone. It lies in your own heart. Quicken your heart with love—and no matter what you have lost, nor what you have mourned in despair, in so much as you love shall it all be restored to you."

They did not cheer as he talked. But they stood leaning forward intently listening. Some of his hearers had expected to hear class hatred preached. Others were expecting to hear the man lash his enemies and many had assumed that he would denounce those who had committed the mistakes of the night before. Instead of giving his hearers these things, he preached a gospel of peace and love and hope. His hearers did not understand that the maimed, lean, red-faced man before them was dipping deeply into their souls and that they were considering many things which they had not questioned before.

When he plunged into the practical part of his speech, an explanation of the allied unions of the Valley, he told in detail something of the ten years' struggle to bring all the unions together under one industrial council in the Wahoo Valley, and listed something of the strength of the organization. He declared that the time had come for the organization to make a public fight for recognition; that organization in secret and under cover was no longer honorable. "The employers are frankly and publicly allied," said Grant. "They have their meetings to talk over matters of common interest. Why should not the unions do the same thing? The smelter men, the teamsters, the miners, the carpenters, the steel workers, the painters, the glass workers, the printers—all the organized men and women in this district have the same common interests that their employers have, and we should in no wise be ashamed of our organization. This meeting is held to proclaim our pride in the common ground upon which organized labor stands with organized capital in the Wahoo Valley."

He called the rolls of the unions in the trades council and for an hour men stood and responded and reported conditions among workers in their respective trades. It was an impressive roll call. After their organization had been com-

pleted, a great roar of pride rose and Grant Adams threw out his steel claw and leaning forward cried:

"We have come to bring brotherhood into this earth. For in the union every man sacrifices something to the common good; mutual help means mutual sacrifice, and self-denial is brotherly love. Fraternity and democracy are synonymous. We must rise together by self-help. I know how easy it is for the rich man to become poor. I know that often the poor man becomes rich. But when Esau throws off the yoke of Jacob, when the poor shall rise and come into their own, the rise shall not be as individuals, but as a class. The glass workers are better paid than the teamsters; but their interests are common, and the better paid workers cannot rise except their poorly paid fellow workmen rise with them. It is a class problem and it must have a class solution."

Grant Adams stood staring at the crowd. Then he spread out his two gaunt arms and closed his eyes and cried: "Oh, Esau, Esau, you were faint and hungry in that elder day when you drank the red pottage and sold your birthright. But did you know when you bartered it away, that in that bargain went your children's souls? Down here in the Valley, five babies die in infancy where one dies up there on the hill. Ninety per cent. of the boys in jail come from the homes in the Valley and ten per cent. from the homes on the hill. And the girls who go out in the night, never to come home—poor girls always. Crime and shame and death were in that red pottage, and its bitterness still burns our hearts. And why—why in the name of our loving Christ who knew the wicked bargain Jacob made—why is our birthright gone? Why does Esau still serve his brother unrequited?" Then he opened his eyes and cried stridently—"I'll tell you why. The poor are poor because the rich are rich. We have been working a decade and a half in this Valley, and profits, not new capital, have developed it. Profits that should have been divided with labor in wages have gone to buy new machines—miles and miles of new machines have come here, bought and paid for with the money that labor earned, and because we have not the machines which our labor has bought, we are poor—

we are working long hours amid squalor surrounded with death and crime and shame. Oh, Esau, Esau, what a pottage it was that you drank in the elder day! Oh, Jacob, Jacob, wrestle, wrestle with thy conscience; wrestle with thy accusing Lord; wrestle, Jacob, wrestle, for the day is breaking and we will not let thee go! How long, O Lord, how long will you hold us to that cruel bargain!"

He paused as one looking for an answer—hesitant, eager, expectant. Then he drew a long breath, turned slowly and sadly and walked away.

No cheer followed him. The crowd was stirred too deeply for cheers. But the seed he had sown quickened in a thousand hearts even if in some hearts it fell among thorns, even if in some it fell upon stony ground. The sower had gone forth to sow.

CHAPTER XXXIX

BEING NO CHAPTER AT ALL BUT AN INTERMEZZO BEFORE THE LAST MOVEMENT

THE stage is dark. In the dim distance something is moving. It is a world hurrying through space. Somewhat in the foreground but enveloped in the murk sit three figures. They are tending a vast loom. Its myriad threads run through illimitable space and the woof of the loom is time. The three figures weaving through the dark do not know whence comes the power that moves the loom eternally. They have not asked. They work in the pitch of night.

From afar in the earth comes a voice—high-keyed and gentle:

A VOICE, *pianissimo:*

"This business of governing a sovereign people is losing its savor. I must be getting some kind of spiritual necrosis. Generally speaking, about all the real pleasure a grand llama of politics finds in life, is in counting his ingrates—his governors and senators and congressmen! Why, George, it's been nearly ten years since I've cussed out a senator or a governor, yet I read Browning with joy and the last time I heard Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, I went stark mad. But woe is me, George! Woe is me. When the Judge and Dan Sands named the postmaster last month without consulting me, I didn't care. I tell you, George, I must be getting old!"

SECOND VOICE, *fortissimo:*

"No, Doc—you're not getting old—why, you're not sixty—a mere spring chicken yet—and Dan Sands is seventy-five if he's a day. What's the matter with you in this here Zeitgeist that Carlyle talks about! It's this restless little time spirit that's the matter with you. You're all broke

out and sick abed with the Zeitgeist. You've got no more necrosis than a Belgian hare's got paresis—I'm right here to tell you and my diagnosis goes."

THIRD VOICE, *adagio:*

"James, my guides say that we're beginning a great movement from the few to the many. That is their expression. Cromwell thinks it means economic changes; but I was talking with Jefferson the other night and he says no—it means political changes in order to get economic. He says Tilden tells him—"

THE SECOND VOICE, *fortissimo:*

"Who cares what Tilden says! My noodle tells me that there's to be a big do in this world, and my control tinkles the cash register, pops into the profit account, eats up ten cent magazines, and gets away with five feet of literary dynamite fuse every week. I'm that old Commodore Noah that's telling you to get out your rubbers for the flood."

THE FIRST VOICE, *andante con expression:*

"It's a queer world—a mighty queer world. Here's Laura's kindergarten growing until it joins with Violet Hogan's day nursery and Laura's flower seeds splashing color out of God's sunshine in front yards clear down to Plain Valley. Money coming in about as they need it. Dan Sands and Morty, Wright and Perry and the Dago saloon keeper, Joe Calvin, John Dexter and the gamblers—all the robbers, high and low, dividing their booty. With all the prosperity we are having, with all the opening of mills and factories—it's getting easier to make money and consequently harder to respect it. The more money there is, the less it buys, and that is true in public sentiment just as it is in groceries and furniture. Do you fellows realize that it's been ten years since the *Times* has run any of those 'Pen Portraits of Self-Made Men'?" A silence, then the voice continues:

"George, I honestly believe, if money keeps getting crowded farther and farther into the background of life—we'll develop an honest politician. We know that to give a bribe is just as bad as to take one. Think of the men debauched with money disguised as campaign expenses, or with offices or with franks and passes and pull and power! Think *of all the bad* government fostered, all the injustices legal-

ized, just to win a sordid game! The best I can do now is to cry, 'Lord have mercy on me, a sinner! The harlot and the thief are my betters.'"

The *voices* cease. The earth whirls on. The brooding spirits at the loom muse in silence, for they need no voices.

THE FIRST FATE: "The birds! The birds! I seemed to hear the night birds twittering to bring in the dawn."

THE SECOND FATE: "The birds do not bring in the dawn. The dawn comes."

THE FIRST FATE: "But always and always before the day, we hear these voices."

THE THIRD FATE: "World after world threads its time through our loom. We watch the pattern grow. Days and eras and ages pass. We know nothing of meanings. We only weave. We know that the pattern brightens as new days come and always voices in the dark tell us of the changing pattern of a new day."

THE FIRST FATE: "But the birds—the birds! I seem to hear the night birds' voices that make the dawn."

THE SECOND FATE: "They are not birds calling, but the whistle of shot and shell and the shrill, far cries of man in air. But still I say the dawn comes, the voices do not bring it."

THE THIRD FATE: "We do not know how the awakening voices in the dark know that the light is coming. We do not know what power moves the loom. We do not know who dreams the pattern. We only weave and muse and listen for the voices of change as a world threads its events through the woof of time on our loom."

The stage is dark. The weavers weave time into circumstances and in the blackness the world moves on. Slowly it grays. A thousand voices rise. Then circumstance begins to run brightly on the loom, and a million voices join in the din of the dawn. The loom goes. The weavers fade. The light in the world pales the thread of time and the whirl of the earth no longer is seen. But instead we see only a town. Half of it shines in the morning sun—half of it hides in the smoke. In the sun on the street is a man.

CHAPTER XL

HERE WE HAVE THE FELLOW AND THE GIRL BEGINNING TO PREPARE FOR THE LAST CHAPTER

A TALL, spare, middle-aged person was Thomas Van Dorn in the latter years of the first decade of the twentieth century; tall and spare and tight-skinned. The youthful olive texture of the skin was worn off and had been replaced by a leathery finish—rather reddish brown in color. The slight squint of his eyes was due somewhat to the little puffs under them, and a suspicious, crafty air had grown into the full orbs, which once glowed with emotion, when the younger man mounted in his oratorical flights. His hands were gloved to match his exactly formal clothes, and his hat—a top-hat when Judge Van Dorn was in the East, and a sawed-off compromise with the local prejudice against top-hats when he was in Harvey—was always in the latest mode. Often the hat was made to match his clothes. He had become rigorous in his taste in neckties and only grays and blacks and browns adorned the almost monkish severity of his garb. Harsh, vertical lines had begun to appear at the sides of the sensuous mouth, and horizontal lines—perhaps of hurt pride and shame—were pressed into his wide, handsome forehead and the zigzag scar was set white in a reddening field.

All these things a photograph would show. But there was that about his carriage, about his mien, about the personality that emerged from all these things which the photograph would not show. For to the eyes of those who had known him in the flush of his youth, something—perhaps it was time, perhaps the burden of the years—seemed to be sapping him, seemed to be drying him out, fruitless, pod-laden, dry and listless, with a bleached soul, naked to the winds that blow across the world. The myriad criss-crosses of minute red veins that marked his cheek often were wet with water from

the eyes that used to glow out of a very volcano of a personality behind them. But after many hours of charging up and down the earth in his great noisy motor, red rims began to form about the watery eyes and they peered furtively and savagely at the world, like wolves from a falling temple.

As he stood by the fire in Mr. Brotherton's sanctuary, holding his *Harper's Weekly* in his hand, and glancing idly over the new books carelessly arranged on the level of the eye upon the wide oak mantel, the Judge came to be conscious of the presence of Amos Adams on a settee near by.

"How do you do, sir?" The habit of speaking to every one persisted, but the suave manner was affected, and the voice was mechanical. The old man looked up from his book—one of Professor Hyslop's volumes, and answered, "Why, hello, Tom—how are you?" and ducked back to his browsing.

"That son of yours doesn't seem to have set the Wahoo afire with his unions in the last two or three years, does he?" said Van Dorn. He could not resist taking this poke at the old man, who replied without looking up:

"Probably not."

Then fearing that he might have been curt the old man lifted his eyes from his book and looking kindly over his glasses continued: "The Wahoo isn't ablaze, Tom, but you know as well as I that the wage scale has been raised twice in the mines, and once in the glass factory and once in the smelter in the past three years without strikes—and that's what Grant is trying to do. More than that, every concern in the Valley now recognizes the union in conferring with the men about work conditions. That's something—that's worth all his time for three years or so, if he had done nothing else."

"Well, what else has he done?" asked Van Dorn quickly.

"Well, Tom, for one thing the men are getting class conscious, and in a strike that will be a strong cement to make them stick."

Van Dorn's neck reddened, as he replied: "Yes—the damn anarchists—class consciousness is what undermines patriotism."

"And patriotism," replied the old man, thumbing the

lapel of his coat that held his loyal legion button, "patriotism is the last resort—of plutocrats!"

He laughed good-naturedly and silently. Then he rose and said as he started to go:

"Well, Tom,—we won't quarrel over a little thing like our beloved country. Why, Lila—" the old man looked up and saw the girl, "bless my eyes, child, how you do grow, and how pretty you look in your new ginghams—just like your mother, twenty years ago!" Amos Adams was talking to a shy young girl—blue-eyed and brown-haired, who was walking out of the store after buying a bottle of ink of Miss Calvin. Lila spoke to the old man and would have gone with him, but for the booming voice of Mr. Brotherton, the gray-clad benedict, who looked not unlike the huge, pot-bellied gray jars which adorned "the sweet serenity of books and wall paper."

Mr. Brotherton had glanced up from his ledger at Amos Adams's mention of Lila's name. Coming forward, he saw her in her new dress, a bright gingham dress that reached so nearly to her shoe tops that Mr. Brotherton cried: "Well, look who's here—if it isn't Miss Van Dorn! And a great pleasure it is to see and know you, Miss Van Dorn."

He repeated the name two or three times gently, while Lila smiled in shy appreciation of Mr. Brotherton's ambushed joke. Her father, standing by a squash-necked lavender jug in the "serenity," did not entirely grasp Mr. Brotherton's point. But while the father was groping for it, Mr. Brotherton went on:

"Miss Van Dorn, once I had a dear friend—such a dear little friend named Lila. Perhaps you may see her sometimes? Maybe sometimes at night she comes to see you—maybe she peeps in when you are alone and asks to play. Well, say—Lila," called Mr. Brotherton as gently as a fog horn tooting a nocturne, "if she ever comes, if you ever see her, will you give her my love? It would be highly improper for a married gentleman with asthmatic tendencies and too much waistband to send his love or anything like it to Miss Van Dorn; it would surely cause comment. But if Lila ever comes, Miss Van Dorn," frolicked the elephant, "*give her my* love and tell her that often here in the

serenity, I shut my eyes and see her playing out on Elm Street, a teenty, weenty girl—with blue hair and curly eyes —or maybe it was the other way around," Mr. Brotherton heaved a prodigious sigh and waved a weary, fat hand— "and here, my lords and gentlemen, is Miss Van Dorn with her dresses down to her shoe tops!"

The girl was smiling and blushing, sheepishly and happily, while Mr. Brotherton was mentally calculating that he would be in his middle fifties before a possible little girl of his might be putting on her first long dresses. It saddened him a little, and he turned, rather subdued, and called into the alcove to the Judge and said:

"Tom, this is our friend, Miss Van Dorn—I was just sending a message by her to a dear—a very dear friend I used to have, named Lila, who is gone. Miss Van Dorn knows Lila, and sees her sometimes. So now that you are here, I'm going to send this to Lila," he raised the girl's hand to his lips and awkwardly kissed it, as he said clumsily, "well, say, my dear—will you see that Lila gets that?"

Her father stepped toward the embarrassed girl and spoke: "Lila—Lila—can't you come here a moment, dear?"

He was standing by the smoldering fire, brushing a rolled newspaper against his leg. Something within him—perhaps Mr. Brotherton's awkward kiss stirred it—was trying to soften the proud, hard face that was losing the mobility which once had been its charm. He held out a hand, and leaned toward the girl. She stepped toward him and asked, "What is it?"

An awkward pause followed, which the man broke with, "Well—nothing in particular, child; only I thought maybe you'd like—well, tell me how are you getting along in High School, little girl."

"Oh, very well; I believe," she answered, but did not lift her eyes to his. Mr. Brotherton moved back to his desk. Again there was silence. The girl did not move away, though the father feared through every painful second that she would. Finally he said: "I hear your mother is getting on famously down in South Harvey. Our people down there say she is doing wonders with her cooking club for girls."

Lila smiled and answered: "She'll be glad to know it, I'm sure." Again she paused, and waited.

"Lila," he cried, "won't you let me help you—do something for you?—I wish so much—so much to fill a father's place with you, my dear—so much."

He stepped toward her, felt for her hand, but could not find it. She looked up at him, and in her eyes there rose the old cloud of sadness that came only once in a long time. It was a puzzled face that he saw looking steadily into his.

"I don't know what you could do," she answered simply.

Something about the pathetic loneliness of his unfathered child, evidenced by the sadness that flitted across her face, touched a remote, unsullied part of his nature, and moved him to say:

"Oh, Lila—Lila—Lila—I need you—I need you—God knows, dear, how I do need you. Won't you come to me sometimes? Won't your mother ever relent—won't she? If she knew, she would be kind. Oh, Lila, Lila," he called as the two stood together there in the twilight with the glow of the coals in the fireplace upon them, "Lila, won't you let me take you home even—in my car? Surely your mother wouldn't care for that, would she?"

The girl looked into the fire and answered, "No," and shook her head. "No—mother would be pleased, I think. She has always told me to be kind to you—to be respectful to you, sir. I've tried to be, sir?"

Her voice rose in a question. He answered by taking her arm and pleading, "Oh, come—won't you let me take you home in my car, Lila—it's getting late—won't you, Lila?"

But the girl turned away; he let her arm drop. She answered, shaking her head:

"I think, sir, if you don't mind—I'd rather walk."

In another second she was gone. Her father leaned against the mantel and the dying coals warmed tears in his hungry, furtive eyes, and his face twitched for a moment before he turned, and walked with some show of pride to his grand car. Half an hour later he was driving homeward, looking neither to the right nor to the left, when his ear caught the word, "Lila," in a girlish treble near him. He *looked up to* see a young miss—a Calvin young miss, in fact

—running and waving her hands toward a group of boys and girls in their middle teens and late teens, trooping up the hill along the sidewalk. They were neighborhood children, and Lila seemed to be the center of the circle. He slowed down his car to watch them. Near Lila was Kenyon Adams, a tall, beautiful youth, fiddle box in hand, but still a boy even though he was twenty. Other boys played about the group and through it, but none was so striking as Kenyon, tall, lithe, with a beautifully poised head of crinkly chestnut hair, who strode gayly among the youths and maidens and yet was not quite of them. Even the Judge could see that Kenyon did not exactly belong—that he was rare and exotic. But as her father's car crept unnoticed past the group, he could see that Lila belonged. She was in no way exotic among the Calvins and Kollanders and the Wrights, and the children of the neighbors in Elm Street. Lila's clear, merry laugh—a laugh that rang like an old bell through Tom Van Dorn's heart—rose above the adolescent din of the group and to the father seemed to be the dominant note in the hilarious cadenza of young life. It struck him that they were like fireflies, glowing and darting and disappearing and weaving about.

And fireflies indeed they were. For in them the fires of life were just beginning to sparkle. Slowly the great bat of a car moved up past them, then darted around the block like the blind creature that it was, and whirling its awkward circle came swooping up again to the glowing, animated stars that held him in a deadly fascination. For those twinkling, human stars playing like fireflies in exquisite joy at the first faint kindling in their hearts of the fires that flame forever in the torch of life, might well have held in their spell a stronger man than Thomas Van Dorn. For the first evanescent fires of youth are the most sacred fires in the world. And well might the great, black bat of a car circle again and again and even again around and come always back to the beautiful light.

But Thomas Van Dorn came back not happily but in sad unrest. It was as though the black bat carried captive on its back a weary pilgrim from the Primrose Hunt, jaded and spent and dour, who saw in the sacred fires what he had

cast away, what he had deemed worthless and of a sudden had seen in its true beauty and in its real value. Once again as the fireflies played their ceaseless game with the ever flickering glow of youth shining through eyes and cheeks from their hearts, the great bat carrying its captive swooped around them—and then out into the darkness of his own charred world.

But the fireflies in the gay spring twilight kept darting and criss-crossing and frolicking up the walk. One by one, each swiftly or lazily disappeared from the maze, and at last only two, Kenyon and Lila, went weaving up the lawn toward the steps of the Nesbit house.

It had been one of those warm days when spring is just coming into the world. All day the boy had been roaming the wide prairies. The voices of the wind in the brown grass and in the bare trees by the creek had found their way into his soul. A curious soul it was—the soul of a poet, the soul of one who felt infinitely more than he knew—the soul of a man in the body of a callow youth.

As he and Lila walked up the hill, all the dreams that had swept across him out in the fields came to him. They sat on the south steps of the Nesbit house watching the spring that was trying to blossom in the pink and golden sunset. The girl was beginning to look at the world through new, strange eyes, and out on the hills that day the boy also had felt the thrill of a new heaven and a new earth.

Their talk was finite and far short of the vision of warm, radiant life-stuff flowing through the universe that had thrilled Kenyon in the hills. Out there, looking eastward over the prairies checked in brown earth, and green wheat, and old grass faded from russet to lavender, with the gray woods worming their way through the valleys, he had found voice and had crooned melodies that came out of the wind and sun, and satisfied his soul. Over and over he had repeated in various cadences the words:

"I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, whence cometh my help."

And he had seemed to be forming a great heart-filling anthem. It was all on his tongue's tip, with the answering *chorus coming* from out of some vast mystery, "Behold, thou

art fair, my love—behold, thou art fair—thou hast dove's eyes." There in the sunshine upon the prairie grass it was as real and vital a part of his soul's aspiration as though it had been reiterated in some glad symphony. But as he sat in the sunset trying to put into his voice the language that stirred his heart, he could only drum upon a box and look at the girl's blue eyes and her rosebud of a face and utter the copper coins of language for the golden yearning of his soul. She answered, thrilled by the radiance of his eyes:

"Isn't the young spring beautiful—don't you just love it, Kenyon? I do."

He rose and stood out in the sun on the lawn. The girl got up. She was abashed; and strangely self-conscious without reason, she began to pirouette down the walk and dance back to him, with her blue eyes fastened like a mystic sky-thread to his somber gaze. A thousand mute messages of youth twinkled across that thread. Their eyes smiled. The two stood together, and the youth kicked with his toes in the soft turf.

"Lila," he asked as he looked at the greening grass of spring, "what do you suppose they mean when they say, 'I will lift up mine eyes to the hills'? The line has been wiggling around in my head all morning as I walked over the prairie, that and another that I can't make much of, about, 'Behold, thou art fair, my love—behold, thou art fair.' Say, Lila," he burst out, "do you sometimes have things just pop into your head all fuzzy with—oh, well, say feeling good and you don't know why, and you are just too happy to eat? I do."

He paused and looked into her bright, unformed face with the fleeting cloud of sadness trailing its blind way across her heart.

"And say, Lila—why, this morning when I was out there all alone I just sang at the top of my voice, I felt so bang-up dandy—and—I tell you something—honest, I kept thinking of you all the time—you and the hills and a dove's eyes. It just tasted good way down in me—you ever feel that way?"

Again the girl danced her answer and sent the words she could not speak through her eyes and his to his innermost consciousness.

"But honest, Lila—don't you ever feel that way—kind of creepy with good feeling—tickledy and crawly, as though you'd swallowed a candy caterpillar and was letting it go down slow—slow, slow, to get every bit of it—say, honest, don't you? I do. It's just fine—out on the prairie all alone with big bursting thoughts bumping you all the time—gee!"

They were sitting on the steps when he finished and his heel was denting the sod. She was entranced by what she saw in his eyes.

"*Of course*, Kenyon," she answered finally. "Girls are—oh, different, I guess. I dream things like that, and sometimes mornings when I'm wiping dishes I think 'em—and drop dishes—and whoopee! But I don't know—girls are not so woozy and slazy inside them as boys. Kenyon, let me tell you something: Girls pretend to be and aren't—not half; and boys pretend they aren't and are—lots more."

She gazed up at him in an unblinking joy of adoration as shameless as the heart of a violet baring itself to the sun. Then she shut her eyes and the lad caught up his instrument and cried:

"Come on, Lila,—come in the house. I've got to play out something—something I found out on the prairie to-day about 'mine eyes unto the hills' and 'the eyes of the dove' and the woozy, fuzzy, happy, creepy thoughts of you all the time."

He was inside the door with the violin in his hands. As she closed the door he put his head down to the brown violin as if to hear it sing, and whispered slowly:

"Oh, Lila—listen—just hear this."

And then it came! "The Spring Sun," it is known popularly. But in the book of his collected music it appears as "Allegro in B." It is the throb of joy of young life asking the unanswerable question of God: what does it mean—this new, fair, wonderful world full of life and birth, and joy; charged with mystery, enveloped in strange, unsolved grandeur, like the cloud pictures that float and puzzle us and break and reform and paint all Heaven in their beauty and then resolve themselves into nothing. Many people think this is Kenyon Adams's most beautiful and poetic message. *Certainly in* the expression of the gayety and the weird,

vague mysticism of youth and poignant joy he never reached that height again. Death is ignored; it is all life and the aspirations of life and the beckonings of life and the bantering of life and the deep, awful, inexorable call of life to youth. Other messages of Kenyon Adams are more profound, more comforting to the hearts and the minds of reasoning, questioning men. But this Allegro in B is the song of youth, of early youth, bidding childhood adieu and turning to life with shining countenance and burning heart.

When he had finished playing he was in tears, and the girl sitting before him was awestricken and rapt as she sat with upturned face with the miracle of song thrilling her soul. Let us leave them there in that first curious, unrealized signaling of soul to soul. And now let us go on into this story, and remember these children, as children still, who do not know that they have opened the great golden door into life!

CHAPTER XLI

HERE WE SEE GRANT ADAMS CONQUERING HIS THIRD AND LAST DEVIL

IN the ebb and flow of life every generation sees its waves of altruism washing in. But in the ebb of altruism in America that followed the Civil War, Amos Adams's ship of dreams was left high and dry in the salt marsh. Finally a time came when the tide began to boom in. But in no substantial way did his newspaper feel the impulse of the current. The *Tribune* was an old hulk; it could not ride the tide. And its skipper, seedy, broken with the years, always too gentle for the world about him, even at his best, ever ready to stop work to read a book, Amos Adams, who had been a crank for a third of a century, remained a crank when much that he preached in earlier years was accepted by the multitude.

Amos Adams might have made the Harvey *Tribune* a financial success if he could have brought himself to follow John Kollander's advice. But Amos could not abide the presence much less the counsel of the professional patriot, with his insistent blue uniform and brass buttons. Under an elaborate pretense of independence, John Kollander was a limber-kneed time-server, always keen-eyed for the crumbs of Dives' table; odd jobs in receiverships, odd jobs in lawsuits for Daniel Sands—as, for instance, furnishing unexpected witnesses to prove improbable contentions—odd jobs in his church, odd jobs in his party organization, always carrying a per diem and expenses; odd jobs for the Commercial Club, where the pay was sure; odd jobs for Tom Van Dorn, spreading slander by innuendo where it would do the most good for Tom in his business; odd jobs for Tom and Dick and for Harry, but always for the immediate use and *benefit of* John Kollander, his heirs and assigns. But if *Amos Adams* ever thought of himself, it was by inadver-

tence. He managed, Heaven only knows how, to keep the *Tribune* going. Jasper bought back from the man who foreclosed the mortgage, his father's homestead. He rented it to his father for a dollar a year and ostentatiously gave the dollar to the Lord—so ostentatiously, indeed, that when Henry Fenn gayly referred to Amos, Grant and Jasper as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the town smiled at his impiety, but the holy Jasper boarded at the Hotel Sands, was made a partner at Wright & Perry's, and became a bank director at thirty. For Jasper was a Sands!

The day after Amos Adams and Tom Van Dorn had met in the Serenity of Books and Wallpaper at Brotherton's, Grant was in the *Tribune* office. "Grant," the father was getting down from his high stool to dump his type on the galley; "Grant, I had a tiff with Tom Van Dorn yesterday. Lord, Lord," cried the old man, as he bent over, straightening some type that his nervous hand had knocked down. "I wonder, Grant"—the father rose and put his hand on his back, as he stood looking into his son's face—"I wonder if all that we feel, all that we believe, all that we strive and live for—is a dream? Are we chasing shadows? Isn't it wiser to conform, to think of ourselves first and others afterward—to go with the current of life and not against it? Of course, my guides—"

"Father," cried Grant, "I saw Tom Van Dorn yesterday, too, in his big new car—and I don't need your guides to tell me who is moving with the current and who is buffeting it. Oh, father, that hell-scorched face—don't talk to me about his faith and mine!" The old man remounted his printer's stool for another half-hour's work before dusk deepened, and smiled as he pulled his steel spectacles over his clear old eyes.

One would fancy that a man whose face was as seamed and scarred with time and struggle as Grant Adams's face, would have said nothing of the hell-scorched face of Tom Van Dorn. Yet for all its lines, youth still shone from Grant Adams's countenance. His wide, candid blue eyes were still boyish, and a soul so eager with hope that it sometimes blazed into a mad intolerance, gazed into the world from behind them. Even his arm and claw became an ani-

mate hand when Grant waved them as he talked; and his wide, pugnacious shoulders, his shock of nonconforming red hair, his towering body, and his solid workman's legs, firm as oak beams,—all,—claw, arms, shoulders, trunk and legs,—translated into human understanding the rebel soul of Grant Adams.

Yet the rebellion of Grant Adams's soul was no new thing to the world. He was treading the rough road that lies under the feet of all those who try to divert their lives from the hard and wicked morals of their times. For the kingdoms of this earth are organized for those who devote themselves chiefly, though of course not wholly, to the consideration of self. The world is still vastly egoistic in its balance. And the unbroken struggle of progress from Abel to yesterday's reformer, has been, is, and shall be the battle with the spirit that chains us to the selfish, accepted order of the passing day. So Grant Adams's face was battle scarred, but his soul, strong and exultant, burst through his flesh and showed itself at many angles of his being. And a grim and militant thing it looked. The flinty features of the man, his coarse mouth, his indomitable blue eyes, his red poll, waving like a banner above his challenging forehead, wrinkled and seamed and gashed with the troubles of harsh circumstance, his great animal jaw at the base of the spiritual tower of his countenance—all showed forth the warrior's soul, the warrior of the rebellion that is as old as time and as new as to-morrow.

Working with his hands for a bare livelihood, but sitting at his desk four or five days in the week and speaking at night, month after month, year after year, for nearly twenty years, without rest or change, had taken much of the bounce of youth from his body. He knew how the money from the accumulated dues was piling up in the Labor Union's war chest in the valley. He had proved what a trade solidarity in an industrial district could do for the men without strikes by its potential strength. Black powder, which killed like the pestilence that stalketh in darkness, was gone. Electric lights had superseded torches in the runways of the mines. Bathhouses were found in all the shafts. In the smelters *the long, killing* hours were abandoned and a score of safety

devices were introduced. But each gain for labor had come after a bitter struggle with the employers. So the whole history of the Wahoo Valley was written in the lines of his broken face.

The reformer with his iridescent dream of progress often hangs its realization upon a single phase of change. Thus when Grant Adams banished black powder from the district, he expected the whole phantasm of dawn to usher in the perfect day for the miners. When he secured electric lights in the runways and baths in the shaft house, he confidently expected large things to follow. While large things hesitated, he saw another need and hurried to it.

Thus it happened, that in the hurrying after a new need, Grant Adams had always remained in his own district, except for a brief season when he and Dr. Nesbit sallied forth in a State-wide campaign to defend the Doctor's law to compel employers to pay workmen for industrial accidents, as the employers replace broken machinery—a law which the Doctor had pushed through the Legislature and which was before the people for a referendum vote. When Grant went out of the Wahoo Valley district he attracted curious crowds, crowds that came to see the queer labor leader who won without strikes. And when the crowds came under Grant's spell, he convinced them. For he felt intensely. He believed that this law would right a whole train of incidental wrongs of labor. So he threw himself into the fight with a crusader's ardor. Grant and the Doctor journeyed over the State through July and August; and in September the wily Doctor trapped Tom Van Dorn into a series of joint debates with Grant that advertised the cause widely and well. From these debates Grant Adams emerged a somebody in politics. For oratory, however polished, and scholarship, however plausible, cannot stand before the wrath of an indignant man in a righteous cause who can handle himself and suppress his wrath upon the platform.

As the week of the debate dragged on and as the pageant of it trailed clear across the State, with crowds hooting and cheering, Doctor Nesbit's cup of joy ran over. And when Van Dorn failed to appear for the Saturday meeting at the capital, the Doctor's happiness mounted to glee.

That night, long after the midnight which ended the day's triumph, Grant and the Doctor were sitting on a baggage truck at a way station waiting for a belated train. Grant was in the full current of his passion. Personal triumph meant little to him—the cause everything. His heart was afire with a lust to win. The Doctor kept looking at Grant with curious eyes—appraising eyes, indeed—from time to time as the younger man's interminable stream of talk of the Cause flowed on. But the Doctor had his passion also. When it burst its bonds, he was saying: "Look here, you crazy man—take a reef in your canvas picture of jocund day upon the misty mountain tops—get down to grass roots." Grant turned an exalted face upon the Doctor in astonishment. The Doctor went on:

"Grant, I can give the concert all right—but, young man, you are selling the soap. That's a great argument you have been making this week, Grant."

"There wasn't much to my argument, Doctor," answered Grant, absently, "though it was a righteous cause. All I did was to make an appeal to the pocketbooks of Market Street all over the State, showing the merchants and farmers that the more the laboring man receives the more he will spend, and if he is paid for his accidents he will buy more prunes and calico; whereas, if he is not paid he will burden the taxes as a pauper. Tom couldn't overcome that argument, but in the long run, our cause will not be won permanently and definitely by the bread and butter and taxes argument, except as that sort of argument proves the justice of our cause and arouses love in the hearts of you middle-class people."

But Dr. Nesbit persisted with his figure. "Grant," he piped, "you certainly can sell soap. Why don't you sell some soap on your own hook? Why don't you let me run you for something—Congress—governor, or something? We can win hands down."

Grant did not wait for the Doctor to finish, but cried in violent protest: "No, no, no—Doctor—no, I must not do that. I tell you, man, I must travel light and alone. I must go into life as naked as St. Francis. The world is *stirring as* with a great spirit of change. The last night

I was at home, up stepped a little Belgian glassblower to me. I'd never seen him before. I said, 'Hello, comrade!' He grasped my hands with both hands and cried 'Comrade! So you know the password. It has given me welcome and warmth and food in France, in England, in Australia, and now here. Everywhere the workers are comrades!' Everywhere the workers are comrades. Do you know what that means, Doctor?''

The Doctor did not answer. His seventy years, and his habit of thinking in terms of votes and parties and factions, made him sigh.

''Doctor,'' cried Grant, ''electing men to office won't help. But this law we are fighting for—this law will help. Doctor, I'm pinning the faith of a decade of struggle on this law.''

The Doctor broke the silence that followed Grant's declaration, to say: ''Grant, I don't see it your way. I feel that life must crystallize its progress in institutions—political institutions, before progress is safe. But you must work out your own life, my boy. Incidentally,'' he piped, ''I believe you are wrong. But after this campaign is over, I'm going up to the capital for one last fling at making a United States Senator. I've only a dozen little white chips in the great game, five in the upper house and seven in the lower house. But we may deadlock it, and if we do,—you'll see thirty years drop off my head and witness the rejuvenation of Old Linen Pants.''

Grant began walking the platform again under the stars like an impatient ghost. The Doctor rose and followed him.

''Grant, now let me tell you something. I am half inclined at times to think it's all moonshine—this labor law we're working to establish. But Laura wants it, and God knows, Grant, she has little enough in her life down there in the Valley. And if this law makes her happy—it's the least I can do for her. She hasn't had what she should have had out of life, so I'm trying to make her second choice worth while. That's why I'm on the soap wagon with you!'' He would have laughed away this serious mood, but he could not.

Grant stared at the Doctor for a moment before answering: ''Why, of course, Dr. Nesbit, I've always known that.

But—I—Doctor—I am consecrated to the cause. It is my reason for living."

The day had passed in the elder's life when he could rise to the younger man's emotions. He looked curiously at Grant and said softly:

"Oh, to be young—to be young—to be young!" He rose, touched the strong arm beside him. "'And the young men shall see visions.' To be young—just to be young! But 'the old men shall dream dreams.' Well, Grant, they are unimportant—not entirely pleasant. We young men of the seventies had a great material vision. The dream of an empire here in the West. It has come true—increased one hundred fold. Yet it is not much of a dream."

He let the arm drop and began drumming on the truck as he concluded: "But it's all I have—all the dream I have now. 'All of which I saw, and part of which I was.' yet," he mused, "perhaps it will be used as a foundation upon which something real and beautiful will be builded."

Far away the headlight of their approaching train twinkled upon the prairie horizon. The two men watched it glow into fire and come upon them. And without resuming their talk, each went his own wide, weary way in the world as they lay in adjoining berths on the speeding train.

At the general election the Doctor's law was upheld by a majority of the votes in the State, but the Doctor himself was defeated for reëlection to the State Senate in his own district. Grant Adams waited, intently and with fine faith, for this law to bring in the millennium. But the Doctor had no millennial faith.

He came down town the morning after his defeat, gay and unruffled. He went toddling into the stores and offices of Market Street, clicking his cane busily, thanking his friends and joking with his foes. But he chirruped to Henry Fenn and Kyle Perry whom he found in the Serenity at the close of the day: "Well, gentlemen, I've seen 'em all! I've taken my medicine like a little man; but I won't lick the spoon. I sha'n't go and see Dan and Tom. I'm willing to go as far as any man in the forgiving and forgetting business, but the Lord himself hasn't quit on them. Look at 'em. The devil's *mortgage is* recorded all over their faces and he's getting

about ready to foreclose on old Dan! And every time Dan hears poor Morty cough, the devil collects his compound interest. Poor, dear, gay Morty—if he could only put up a fight!"

But he could not put up a fight and his temperature rose in the afternoon and he could not meet with his gymnasium class in South Harvey in the evening, but sent a trainer instead. So often weeks passed during which Laura Van Dorn did not see Morty and the daily boxes of flowers that came punctiliously with his cards to the kindergarten and to Violet Hogan's day nursery, were their only reminders of the sorry, lonely, footless struggle Morty was making.

It was inevitable that the lives of Violet Hogan and Laura Van Dorn in South Harvey should meet and merge. And when they met and merged, Violet Hogan found herself devoting but a few hours a day to her day nursery, while she worked six long, happy hours as a stenographer for Grant Adams in his office at the Vanderbilt House. For, after all, it was as a stenographer that she remembered herself in the grandeur and the glory of her past. So Henry Fenn and Laura Van Dorn carried on the work that Violet began, and for them souls and flowers and happiness bloomed over the Valley in the dark, unwholesome places which death had all but taken for his own.

It was that spring when Dr. Nesbit went to the capital and took his last fling at State politics. For two months he had deadlocked his party caucus in the election of a United States Senator with hardly more than a dozen legislative votes. And he was going out of his dictatorship in a golden glow of glory.

And this was the beginning of the golden age for Captain Morton. The Morton-Perry Axle Works were thriving. Three eight-hour shifts kept the little plant booming, and by agreement with the directors of the Independent mine, Nathan Perry spent five hours a day in the works. He and the Captain, and the youngest Miss Morton, who was keeping books, believed that it would go over the line from loss to profit before grass came. The Captain hovered about the plant like an earth-bound spirit day and night, interrupting the work of the men, disorganizing the system that

Nathan had installed, and persuading himself that but for him the furnaces would go dead and the works shut down.

It was one beautiful day in late March, after the November election wherein the Doctor's law had won and the Doctor himself had lost, that Grant Adams was in Harvey figuring with Mr. Brotherton on supplies for his office. Captain Morton came tramping down the clouds before him as he swept into the Serenity and jabbed a spike through the wheels of commerce with the remark: "Well, George—what do you think of my regalia—eh?"

Mr. Brotherton and Grant looked up from their work. They beheld the Captain arrayed in a dazzling light gray spring suit—an exceedingly light gray suit, with a hat of the same color and gloves and shoe spats to match, with a red tie so red that it all but crackled. "First profits of the business. We got over the line yesterday noon, and I had a thousand to go on, and this morning I just went on this spree—what say?"

"Well, Cap, when Morty Sands sees you he will die of envy. You're certainly the lily of the Valley and the bright and morning star—the fairest of ten thousand to my soul! Grant," said Brotherton as he turned to his customer, "behold the plute!"

The Captain stood grinning in pride as the men looked him over.

" 'Y gory, boys, you'd be surprised the way that Household Horse has hit the trade. Orders coming in from automobile makers, and last week we decided to give up making the little power saver and make the whole rear axle. We're going to call it the Morton-Perry Axle, and put in a big plant, and I was telling Ruthy this morning, I says, 'Ruth,' says I, 'if we make the axle business go, I'll just telephone down to Wright & Perry and have them send you out something nobby in husbands, and, 'y gory, a nice thousand-mile wedding trip and maybe your pa will go along for company—what say?' "

He was an odd figure in his clothes—for they were ready-made—made for the figure of youth, and although he had *been* in them but a few hours, the padding was bulging at *the wrong places*; and they were wrinkled where they should

be tight. His bony old figure stuck out at the knees, and the shoulders and elbows, and the high collar would not fit his skinny neck. But he was happy, and fancied he looked like the pictures of college boys in the back of magazines. So he answered Mr. Brotherton's question about the opinion of the younger daughter as to the clothes by a profound wink.

"Scared—scared plumb stiff—what say? I caught Marthy nodding at Ruth and Ruthy looking hard at Marthy, and then both of 'em went to the kitchen to talk over calling up Emmy and putting out fly poison for the women that are lying in wait for their pa. Scared—why, scared's no name for it—what say?"

"Well, Captain," answered Mr. Brotherton, "you are certainly voluptuous enough in your new stage setting to have your picture on a cigar box as a Cuban beauty or a Spanish señorita."

The Captain was turning about, trying to see how the coat set in the back and at the same time watching the hang of the trousers. Evidently he was satisfied with it. For he said: "Well—guess I'll be going. I'll just mosey down to Mrs. Herdicker's to give Emmy and Marthy and Ruthy something to keep 'em from thinking of their real troubles—eh?" And with a flourish he was gone.

When Grant's order was filled, he said, "Violet will call for this, George; I have some other matters to attend to."

As he assembled the goods for the order, Mr. Brotherton called out, "Well, how is Violet, anyway?" Grant smiled. "Violet is doing well. She is blooming over again, and when she found herself before a typewriter—it really seemed to take the curve out of her back. Henry declares that the typewriter put ribbon in her hair. Laura Van Dorn, I believe, is responsible for Violet's shirt waists. Henry Fenn comes to the office twice a day, to make reports on the sewing business. But what he's really doing, George, is to let her smell his breath to prove that he's sober, and so she runs the two jobs at once. Have you seen Henry recently?"

"Well," replied Brotherton, "he was in a month or so ago to borrow ten to buy a coat—so that he could catch up

with the trousers of that suit before they grew too old. He still buys his clothes that way."

Grant threw back his red head and grinned a grim, silent grin: "Well, that's funny. Didn't you know what is keeping him away?" Again Grant grinned. "The day he was here he came wagging down with that ten-dollar bill, but his conscience got the best of him for lavishing so much money on himself, so he slipped it to Violet and told her to buy her some new teeth—you know she's been ashamed to open her mouth now for years. Violet promised she would get the teeth in time for Easter. And pretty soon in walks Mrs. Maurice Stromsky—who scrubs in the Wright & Perry Building, whose baby died last summer and had to be buried in the Potter's field—she came in; and she and Violet got to talking about the baby—and Violet up and gave that ten to Mrs. Stromsky, to get the baby out of the Potter's field."

Mr. Brotherton laughed his great laugh. Grant went on: "But that isn't all. The next day in walks Mrs. Maurice Stromsky, penitent as a dog, and I heard her squaring herself with Violet for giving that old saw-buck of yours to the Delaneys, whose second little girl had diphtheria and who had no money for antitoxin. I never saw your ten again, George," said Grant. "It seemed to be going down for the last time." He looked at Brotherton quizzically for a second and asked:

"So old Henry hasn't been around since—isn't that joyous? Well—anyway, he'll show up to-day or to-morrow, for he's got the new coat; he got it this morning. Jasper was telling me."

In an hour Grant, returning after his morning's errands, was standing by the puny little blaze that John Dexter had stirred out of the logs in the Serenity. The two were standing together. Mr. Brotherton, reading his Kansas City paper at his desk, called to them: "Well, I see Doc Jim's still holding his deadlock and they can't elect a United States Senator without him!"

A telegraph messenger boy came in, looked into the Serenity, and said, "Mr. Adams, I was looking for you."

Grant signed the boy's book, read the telegram, and stood dumbly gazing at the fire, as he held the sheet in his hand.

The fire popped and snapped and the little blaze grew stronger when a log dropped in two. A customer came in—picked up a magazine—called, "Charge it, please," then went out. The door slammed. Another customer came and went. Miss Calvin stepped back to Mr. Brotherton. The bell of the cash register tinkled. Then Grant Adams turned, looked at the minister absently for a moment, and handed him the sheet. It read:

"I have pledged in writing five more votes than are needed to make you the caucus nominee and give you a majority on the joint ballot to-night for United States Senator. Come up first train."

It was signed "James Nesbit." The preacher dropped his hand still holding the yellow sheet, and looked into the fire.

"Well?" asked Grant.

"You say," returned John Dexter, and added: "It would be a great opportunity—give you the greatest forum for your cause in Christendom—give you more power than any other labor advocate ever held in the world before."

He said all this tentatively and as one asking a question. Grant did not reply. He sat pounding his leg with his claw, abstractedly.

"You needn't be a mere theorist in the Senate. You could get labor laws enacted that would put forward the cause of labor. Grant, really, it looks as though this was your life's chance."

Grant reached for the telegram and read it again. The telegram fluttering in his hands dropped to the floor. He reached for it—picked it up, folded it on his claw carefully, and put it away. Then he turned to the preacher and said harshly:

"There's nothing in it. To begin: you say I'll have more power than any other labor leader in the world. I tell you, labor leaders don't need personal power. We don't need labor laws—that is, primarily. What we need is sentiment—a public love of the under dog that will make our present laws intolerable. It isn't power for me, it isn't clean politics for the State, it isn't labor laws that's my job. My job,

dearly beloved," he hooked the minister's hand and tossed it gently, "my job, oh, thou of little faith," he cried, as a flaming torch of emotion seemed to brush his face and kindle the fanatic glow in his countenance while his voice lifted, "is to stay right down here in the Wahoo Valley, pile up money in the war chest, pile up class feeling among the men —comradeship—harness this love of the poor for the poor into an engine, and then some day slip the belt on that engine—turn on the juice and pull and pull and pull for some simple, elemental piece of justice that will show the world one phase of the truth about labor."

Grant's face was glowing with emotion. "I tell you, the day of the Kingdom is here—only it isn't a kingdom, it's Democracy—the great Democracy. It's coming. I must go out and meet it. In the dark down in the mines I saw the Holy Ghost rise into the lives of a score of men. And now I see the Holy Ghost coming into a great class. And I must go—go with neither purse nor script to meet it, to live for it, and maybe to die for it." He shook his head and cried vehemently:

"What a saphead I'd be if I fell to that bait!" He turned to the store and called to Miss Calvin. "Ave—is there a telegraph blank in the desk?"

Mr. Brotherton threw it, skidding, across the long counter. Grant fumbled in his vest for a pen, held the sheet firmly with his claw and wrote:

"You are kindness itself. But the place doesn't interest me. Moreover, no man should go to the Senate representing all of a State, whose job it is to preach class consciousness to a part of the State. Get a bigger man. I thank you, however, with all my heart."

Grant watched the preacher read the telegram. He read it twice, then he said: "Well—of course, that's right. That's right—I can see that. But I don't know—don't you think—I mean aren't you kind of—well, I can't just express it; but—"

"Well, don't try, then," returned Grant.

However, Doctor Nesbit, having something rather more

than the ethics of the case at stake, was aided by his emotions in expressing himself. He made his views clear, and as Grant sat at his desk that afternoon, he read this in a telegram from the Doctor:

"Well, of all the damn fools!"

That was one view of the situation. There was this other. It may be found in one of those stated communications from perhaps Ruskin or Kingsley, which the Peach Blow Philosopher sometimes vouchsafed to the earth and it read:

"A great life may be lived by any one who is strong enough to fail for an ideal."

Still another view may be had by setting down what John Dexter said to his wife, and what she said to him. Said he, when he had recounted the renunciation of Grant Adams:

"There goes the third devil. First he conquered the temptation to marry and be comfortable; next he put fame behind him, and now he renounces power."

And she said: "It had never occurred to me to consider Laura Van Dorn, or national reputation, or a genuine chance for great usefulness as a devil. I'm not sure that I like your taste in devils."

To which answer may be made again by Mr. Left in a communication he received from George Meredith, who had recently passed over. It was verified by certain details as to the arrangement of the books on the little table in the little room in the little house on a little hill where he was wont to write, and it ran thus:

"Women, always star-hungry, ever uncompromising in their demand for rainbows, nibbling at the entre' and pushing aside the roast, though often adoring primitive men who gorge on it, but ever in the end rewarding abstinence and thus selecting a race of spiritually-minded men for mates, are after all the world's materialists."

CHAPTER XLII

A CHAPTER WHICH IS CONCERNED LARGELY WITH THE LOVE AFFAIRS OF "THE FULL STRENGTH OF THE COMPANY"

THIS story, first of all, and last of all, is a love story. The emotion called love and its twin desire hunger, are the two primal passions of life. From love have developed somewhat the great altruistic institutions of humanity—the family, the tribe, the State, the nation, and the varied social activities—religion, patriotism, philanthropy, brotherhood. While from hunger have developed war and trade and property and wealth. Often it happens in the growth of life that men have small choice in matters of living that are motived by hunger or its descendant concerns; for necessity narrows the choice. But in affairs of the heart, there comes wide latitudes of choice. It is reasonably just therefore to judge a man, a nation, a race, a civilization, an era, by its love affairs. So a book that would tell of life, that would paint the manners of men, and thus show their hearts, must be a love story. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," runs the proverb, and, mind you, it says heart—not head, not mind, but heart; as a man thinketh in his heart, in that part of his nature where reside his altruistic emotions—so is he.

It is the sham and shame of the autobiographies that flood and dishearten the world, that they are so uncandid in their relation of those emotional episodes in life—episodes which have to do with what we know for some curious reason as "the softer passions." Cæsar's Gaelic wars, his bridges, his trouble with the impedimenta, his fights with the Helvetians —who cares for them? Who cares greatly for Napoleon's expedition against the Allies? Of what human interest is Grant's tale of the Wilderness fighting? But to know of Calpurnia, of her predecessors, and her heirs and assigns in

Cæsar's heart; to know the truth about Josephine and the crash in Napoleon's life that came with her heartbreak—if a crash did come, or if not, to know frankly what did come; to know how Grant got on with Julia Dent through poverty and riches, through sickness and in health, for better or for worse—with all the strain and stress and struggle that life puts upon the yoke that binds the commonplace man to the commonplace woman rising to eminence by some unimportant quirk of his genius reacting on the times—these indeed would be memoirs worth reading.

And whatever worth this story holds must come from its value as a love-story,—the narrative of how love rose or fell, grew or withered, bloomed and fruited, or rotted at the core in the lives of those men and women who move through the scenes painted upon this canvas. After all, who cares that Thomas Van Dorn waxed fat in the land, that he received academic degrees from great universities which his masters supported, that he told men to go and they went, to come and they came? These things are of no consequence. Men are doing such things every minute of every day in all the year.

But here sits Thomas Van Dorn, one summer afternoon, with a young broker from New York—one of those young brokers with not too nice a conscience, who laughs too easily at the wrong times. He and Thomas Van Dorn are upon the east veranda of the new Country Club building in Harvey —the pride of the town—and Thomas is squinting across the golf course at a landscape rolling away for miles like a sea, a landscape rich in homely wealth. The young New Yorker comes with letters to Judge Van Dorn from his employers in Broad Street, and as the two sip their long cool glasses, and betimes smoke their long black cigars, the former judge falls into one of those self-revealing philosophical moods that may be called the hypnoidal semi-conscious state of common sense. Said Van Dorn:

"Well, boy—what do you think of the greatest thing in the world?" And not waiting for an answer the older man continued as he held his cigar at arm's length and looked between his elevated feet at the landscape: " 'Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love.' Great

old lover—Solomon. Rather out of the amateur class—with his thousand wives and concubines; perhaps a virtuous man withal, but hardly a fanatic on the subject; and when he said he was sick of love—probably somewhere in his fifties,—Solomon voiced a profound man's truth. Most of us are. Speaking generally of love, my boy, I am with Solomon. There is nothing in it."

The cigar in his finely curved mouth—the sensuous mouth of youth, that had pursed up dryly in middle age—was pointed upward. It stood out from a reddish lean face and moved when the muscles of the face worked viciously in response to some inward reflection of Tom Van Dorn.

He drawled on, "Think of the time men fool away chasing calico. I've gone all the gaits, and I know what I'm talking about. Ladies and Judy O'Gradies, married and single, decent and indecent—it's all the same. I tell you, young man, there's nothing in it! Love," he laughed a little laugh: "Love—why, when I was in the business," he sniffed, "I never had any trouble loving any lady I desired, nor getting her if I loved her long enough and strong enough. When I was a young cub like you," Van Dorn waved his weed grandly toward the young broker, "I used to keep myself awake, cutting notches in my memory—naming over my conquests. But now I use it as a man does the sheep over the fence, to put me to sleep, and I haven't been able to pass my fortieth birthday in the list for two years, without snoozing. What a fool a man can make of himself over calico! The ladies, God bless 'em, have got old John Barleycorn beaten a mile, when it comes to playing hell with a man's life. Again speaking broadly, and allowing for certain exceptions, I should say—" he paused to give the judicial pomp of reflection to his utterances—"the bigger fool the woman is, the greater fool a man makes of himself for her. And all for what?"

His young guest interjected the word "Love?" in the pause. The Judge made a wry face and continued:

"Love? Love—why, man, you talk like a school girl. There is no love. Love and God are twin myths by which we explain the relation of our fates to our follies. The only thing about me that will live is the blood I transmit to my

children! We live in posterity. As for love and all the mysteries of the temple—waugh—woof!" he shuddered.

He put back his cigar into the corner of his hard mouth. He was squinting cynically across the rolling golf course. What he saw there checked his talk. He opened his eyes to get a clearer view. His impression grew definite and unmistakable. There, half playing and half sporting, like young lambs upon the close-cropped turf, were Kenyon Adams and Lila Van Dorn! They were unconscious of all that their gay antics disclosed. They were happy, and were trying only to express happiness as they ran together after the ball, that flew in front of them like a mad butterfly. But in the sad lore of his bleak heart, the father read the meaning of their happiness. Youth in love was never innocent for him. Looking at Lila romping with her lover, he turned sick at heart. But he held himself in hand. Only the zigzag scar on his forehead flashing white in the pink of his brow betrayed the turmoil within him. He tried to keep his eyes off the golf course. A sharp dread that he might transmit himself in nature to posterity only through the base blood of the Adamses, struck him. He closed his eyes. But the wind brought to him the merriment of the young voices. A jealousy of Kenyon, and an anger at him, flared up in the father. So Tom Van Dorn drew down the corners of his mouth—and batted his furtive eyes, and put on his bony knee a mottled, nervous hand, with brown splotches at the wrist, coming up over the veined furrows that led to his tapering fingers, as he cried harshly in a tone that once had been soft and mellifluous, and still was deep and chesty: "Still me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick of love!"

He would have gone away from the torture that came, as he stared at the lovers, but his devil held him there. He was glad when a noise of saw and hammer at the lake drowned the voices on the lawn. His gladness lasted but a moment. For soon he saw the young people quit chasing their crazy butterfly of a golf ball, and wander half way up the hill from the lake, to sit in the snug shade of a wide-spreading, low-branched elm tree. Then the father was nervous, because he could not hear their voices. As he sat with the young broker, snarling at the anonymous phantoms of his past which were

bedeviling him, a gray doubt kept brushing across his mind. He realized clearly that he had no legal right to question Lila's choice of companions. He understood that the law would not justify anything that he might do, or say, or think, concerning her and her fortunes. Yet there unmistakably was the Van Dorn set to her pretty head and a Van Dorn gesture in her gay hands that had come down from at least four generations in family tradition. And he had no right even to be offended when she would merge that Van Dorn blood with the miserable Adams heredity. His impotence in the situation baffled him, and angered him. The law was final to his mind; but it did not satisfy his wrathful questioning heart. For in his heart, he realized that denial was not escape from the responsibility he had renounced when he tripped down the steps of their home and left Lila pleading for him in her mother's arms. He bit his ragged cigar and cursed his God, while the young man with Tom Van Dorn thought, "Well, what a dour old Turk he is!"

The hammering and sawing, which drowned the voices of the young people under the tree, came from the new bathing pavilion near by. Grant Adams was working on a two days' job putting up the pavilion for the summer. He was out of Van Dorn's view, facing another angle of the long three-faced veranda. Grant saw Kenyon lying upon the turf, slim and graceful and with the beauty of youth radiating from him, and Grant wondered, as he worked, why his son should be there playing among the hills, while the sons of other men, making much more money than he—much more money indeed than many of the others who flitted over the green—should toil in the fumes of South Harvey and in the great industrial Valley through long hard hours of work, that sapped their heads and hearts by its monotony of motion, and lack of purpose. As he gazed at the lovers, their love did not stick in his consciousness—even if he realized it. Their presence under the elm tree at midday rose as a problem which deepened a furrow here and there in his seamed face and he hammered and sawed away with a will, working out in his muscles the satisfaction which his mind could not bring him.

As the two fathers from different vistas looked upon their

children, Kenyon and Lila beneath the elm tree were shyly toying with vagrant dreams that trailed across their hearts. He was looking up at her and saying:

"Lila—who are we—you and I? I have been gazing at you three minutes while you were talking, and I see some one quite different from the you I knew before. Looking up at you, instead of down at you, is like transposing you. You are strangely new in this other key."

The girl did not try to respond in kind—with her lips at least. She began teasing the youth about his crinkly hair. Breaking a twig as she spoke, she threw it carelessly at his hair, and it stuck in the closely curled locks. She laughed gayly at him. Perhaps in some way rather subtly than suddenly, as by a ghostly messenger from afar, he may have been made aware of her beautiful body, of the exquisite lines of her figure, of the pink of her radiant skin, or the red of her girlish lips. For the consciousness of these things seemed to spend his soul in joy.

The blazing eyes of Tom Van Dorn, squinting down upon the couple under the tree, could see the grace that shone from a thousand reactions of their bodies and faces. He opened his mouth to voice something from the bitterness of his heart but did not speak. Instead he yawned and cried: "And so we rot and we rot and we rot."

Now it matters little what the lovers chattered about there under the elm tree, as they played with sticks and pebbles. It was what they would have said that counts—or perhaps what they should have said, if they had been able to voice their sense of the gift which the gods were bestowing. But they were dumb humans, who threw pebbles at each other's toes, though in the deep places of their souls, far below the surface waves of bashful patter, heart might have spoken to heart in passing thus:

"Oh, Lila, what is beauty? What is it in the soul, running out glad to meet beauty, whether of line, of tone, of color, of form, of motion, of harmony?"

And the answer might have been trumpeted back through the deep:

"Maybe beauty is the God that is everywhere and everything, releasing himself in matter. Perhaps for our eyes and

ears and fingers, the immanent God had an equation, whose answer is locked in our souls that are also a part of God—created in his image. And when in curve or line, in sequence of notes or harmony, or in thrilling touch sense, the equation is stated in terms of radiation, God seeking our soul's answer, speaks to us."

But none of this trumpet call of souls reached the two fathers who were watching the lovers. For one man was too old in selfishness to understand, and the other had grown too old in bearing others' burdens to know what voices speak through the soul's trumpet, when love first comes into the heart. So the hammers hammered and the saws groaned in the pavilion, and a hard heart hammered and a soul groaned and a tongue babbled folly on the veranda. But under the elm tree, eyes met, and across space went the message that binds lives forever. She picked up a twig longer than most twigs about her, reached with it and touched his forehead furtively, stroked his crinkled hair, blushing at her boldness. His head sank to the earth, he put his face upon the grass, and for a second he found joy in the rush of tears. They heard voices, bringing the planet back to them; but voices far away. On the hill across the little valley they could see two earnest golfers, working along the sky-line.

The couple on the sky-line hurried along in the heat. The man mopped his face, and his brown, hairy arms, and his big sinewy neck. The woman, rather thin, but fresh and with the maidenly look of one who isn't entirely sure what that man will do next, kept well in the lead.

"Well, Emma—there's love's young dream all right." He stopped to puff, and waved at the couple by the tree. Then he hitched up his loose, baggy trousers, gave a jerk to his big flowing blue necktie, let fly at the ball and cried "Fore." When he came up to the ball again, he was red and winded. "Emma," he said, "let's go have something to eat at the house—my figure'll do for an emeritus bridegroom—won't it?" And thus they strolled over the fields and out of the game.

But on another hill, another couple in the midst of a flock of children attracted by one of Mr. Brotherton's smashing laughs, looked down and saw Lila and Kenyon. The quick

eyes of love caught the meaning of the figures under the tree.

"Look, mamma—look," said Nathan Perry, pointing toward the tree.

"Oh, Nate," cried Anne, "—isn't it nice! Lila and Kenyon!"

"Well, mamma—are you happy?" asked Nathan, as he leaned against the tree beside her. She nodded and directed their glances to the children and said gently, "And they justify it—don't they?"

He looked at her for a moment, and said, "Yes, dear—I suppose that's what the Lord gave us love for. That is why love makes the world go around."

"And don't the people who don't have them miss it—my! Nate, if they only knew—if these bridge-playing, childless ones knew how dear they are—what joy they bring—just as children—not for anything else—do you suppose they would—"

"Oh, you can't tell," answered the young father. "Perhaps selfish people shouldn't have children; or perhaps it's the children that make us unselfish, and so keep us happy. Maybe it's one of those intricate psychical reactions, like a chemical change—I don't know! But I do know the kids are the best things in the world."

She put her hand in his and squeezed it. "You know, Nate, I was just thinking to-day as I put up the lunch—I'm a mighty lucky woman. I've had all these children and kept every one so far; I've had such joy in them—such joy, and we haven't had death. Even little Annie's long sickness, and everything—Oh, dear, Nate—but isn't she worth it—isn't she worth it?"

He kissed her hand and replied, "You know I'm so glad we went down to South Harvey to live, Anne. I can see—well, here's the way it is. Lots of families down there—families that didn't have any more to go on than we had then, started out, as we did. They had a raft of kids—" he laughed, "just as we did. But, mamma—they're dead—or worse, they're growing up under-fed, and are hurrying into the works or the breaker bins. I tell you, Anne—here's the thing. Those fathers and mothers didn't have any more money than

we had—but we did have more and better training than they had. You knew better than to feed our kids trash, you knew how to care for them—we knew how to spend our little. so that it would count. They didn't. We have ours, and they have doctors' and undertakers' bills. It isn't blood that counts so much—as the difference in bringing up. We're lovers because of our bringing up. Otherwise, we'd be fighting like cats and dogs, I'd be drinking, you'd be slommicking around in wrappers, and the kids would be on the streets."

The children playing on the gravel bank were having a gay time. The mother called to them to be careful of their clothes, and then replied:

"Nate, honestly I believe if I had two or three million dollars, and could give every girl in South Harvey a good education—teach her how to cook and keep house and care for babies before she is eighteen, that we could change the whole aspect of South Harvey in a generation. If I had just two or three million dollars to spend—I could fill that town just as full as Harvey of happy couples like us. Of course there'd be the other kind—some of them—just as there are the other kind in Harvey—people like the Van Dorns—but they would be the exception in South Harvey, as the Van Dorns are the exception in Harvey. And two or three million dollars would do it."

"Yes, mamma,—that's the hell of it—the very hell of it that grinds my gizzard—your father and my father and the others who haven't done a lick of the work—and who are entitled only to a decent interest and promoters' profits, have taken out twenty million dollars from South Harvey in dividends in the last thirty years—and this is the result. Hell for forty thousand people down there, and—you and I and a few dozen educated happy people are the fruit of it. Sometimes, Anne, I look at our little flock and look at you so beautiful, and think of our life so glorious, and wonder how a just God can permit it."

They looked at the waving acres of blue-grass, dotted with trees, at the creek winding its way through the cornfields, dark green and all but ready to tassle, then up at the clear sky, untainted with the smoke of Harvey.

Then they considered the years that lay back of them.

"I think, Nate," she answered, "that to love really and truly one man or one woman makes one love all men and women. I feel that way even about the little fellow that's coming. I love him so, that even he makes me love everything. And so I can't just pray for him—I have to pray for all the mothers carrying babies and all the babies in the world. I think when love comes into the world it is immortal. We die, but the sum of love we live, we leave; it goes on; it grows. It is the way God gets into the world. Oh, Nate," she cried, "I want to live in the next world—personally—with you—to know the very you. I don't want the impersonal immortality—I want just you. But, dear—I—why, I'd give up even that if I could be sure that the love we live would never leave this earth. Think what the love of Christ did for the earth and He is still with us in spirit. And I know when we go away—when any lovers go away, the love they have lived will never leave this earth. It will live and joy—yes, and agonize too at the injustice of the world—live and be crucified over and over again, so long as injustice exists. Only as love grows in the world, and is hurt—is crucified—will wrongs be righted, will the world be saved."

He patted her hand for a minute.

"Kyle, Nate, Annie—come here, children," cried the father. After some repetition of the calling, they came trooping up, asking: "What is it?"

"Nothing at all," answered the father, "we just wanted to kiss you and feel and see if your wings were sprouting, so that we could break them off before you fly away," whereupon there was a hugging bee all around, and while every one was loving every one else, a golf ball flew by them, and a moment later the white-clad, unbent figure of Mrs. Bedelia Satterthwaite Nesbit appeared, bare-headed and bare-armed, and behind her trotted the devoted white figure of the Doctor, carrying two golf sticks.

"Chained to her chariot—to make a Roman holiday," piped the Doctor. "She's taking this exercise for my health."

"Well, James," replied his wife rather definitely, "I know you need it!"

"And that settles it," cried the little man shrilly, "say,

Nate, if we men ever get the ballot, I'm going to take a stand for liberty."

"I'm with you, Doctor," replied the young man.

"Nate," he mocked in his comical falsetto, "as you grow older and get further and further from your mother's loving care, you'll find that there was some deep-seated natural reason why we men should lead the sheltered life and leave the hurly-burly of existence to the women."

From long habit, in such cases Mrs. Nesbit tried not to smile and, from long habit, failed. "Doctor Jim," she cried as he picked up her ball, and set it for her, "don't make a fool of yourself."

The little man patted the earth under the ball, and looked up and said as he took her hand, and obviously squeezed it for the spectators, as he rose,

"My dear—it's unnecessary. You have made one of me every happy minute for forty years," and smiling at the lovers and their children, he took the hand held out for him after she had sent the ball over the hill, and they went away as he chuckled over his shoulder and cheeped: "Into the twilight's purple rim—through all the world she followed him," and trotting behind her as she went striding into the sunset, they disappeared over the hill.

When they had disappeared Anne began thinking of her picnic. She and Nathan left the children at the lake, and walked to the club house for the baskets. On the veranda they met Captain Morton in white flannels with a gorgeous purple necktie and a panama hat of a price that made Anne gasp. He came bustling up to Anne and Nathan and said:

"Surprise party—I'm going to give the girls a little surprise party next week—next Tuesday, and I want you to come—what say? Out here—next Tuesday night—going to have all the old friends—every one that ever bought a window hanger, or a churn, or a sewing machine, or a Peerless cooker, or a Household Horse—but keep it quiet—surprise on the girls, eh?"

When they had accepted, the Captain lowered his voice and said mysteriously: "'Y gory—the old man's got some ginger in him yet—eh?" and bustled away with a card in

his hands containing the names of the invited guests, checking the Perrys from the list as he went.

As Captain Morton rounded the corner of the veranda and came into the out-of-door dining room, he found Margaret Van Dorn, sitting at a table by a window with Ahab Wright —flowing white side whiskers and white necktie inviolate and pristine in their perfection. Ahab was clearly confused when the Captain sailed into the room. For there was a breeziness about the Captain's manner, and although Ahab respected the Captain's new wealth, still his years of poverty and the meanness of his former calling as a peddler of insignificant things, made Ahab Wright feel a certain squeamishness when he had to receive Captain Morton upon the term which, in Ahab's mind, a man of so much money should be received.

Mrs. Van Dorn was using her eyes on Ahab. Perhaps they cast the spell. She was leaning forward with her chin in her hands, with both elbows on the table, and Ahab Wright, of the proud, prosperous and highly respectable firm of Wright & Perry, was in much the mental and moral attitude of the bird when the cat creeps up to the tree-trunk. He was not unhappy; not terrorized—just curious and rather resistless, knowing that if danger ever came he could fly. And Mrs. Van Dorn, who had tired of the toys at hand, was adventuring rather aimlessly into the cold blue eyes of Ahab, to see what might be in them.

"For many years," she was saying, and pronounced it "yee-ahs," having remembered at the moment to soften her "r's," "I have been living on a highah plane wheyah one ignoahs the futuah and foahgets the pahst. On this plane one rises to his full capacity of soul strength, without the hampah of remoahs or the terror of a vindictive Providence."

She might as well have been reciting the alphabet backwards so far as Ahab understood or cared what she said. He was fascinated by her resemblance to a pink and white marshmallow—rather over-powdered. But she was still fortifying herself from that little black box in the farthest corner in the bottom drawer of her dresser—and fortifying herself with two brown pellets instead of one. So she ogled

Ahab Wright by way of diversion, and sat in the recesses of her soul and wondered what she would say next.

The Captain pulling his panama off made a tremendous bow as Margaret was saying: "Those who grahsp the great Basic Truths in the Science of Being—" and just as the Captain was about to open his mouth to invite Ahab Wright to his party, plumb came the ghastly consciousness to him that the Van Dorns were not on his list. For the Van Dorns, however securely they were entrenched socially among the new people who had no part in the town's old quarrel with Tom, however the oil and gas and smelter people and the coal magnates may have received the Van Dorns—still they were under the social ban of the only social Harvey that Captain Morton knew. So as a man falling from a balloon gets his balance, the Captain gasped as he came up from his low bow and said:

"Madam, I says to myself just now as I looks over to that elm tree yonder," he pointed to the place were Kenyon and Lila were sitting, "soon we'll be having the fourth generation here in Harvey, and I says, that will interest Tom! An 'y gory, ma'am, as I saw you sitting here, I says as it was well in my mind, 'Here's Tom's lady love, and I'll just go over and pass my congratulations on to Tom through the apple of his eye, as you may say, and not bother him and the young man around the corner there in their hoss trade, eh? What say?" He was flushed and red, and he did not know exactly where to stop, but it was out—and after a few sparring sentences, he broke away from the clutch of his bungling intrusion and was gone. But as the Captain left the couple at the table, the spell was broken. Life had intruded, and Ahab rose hastily and went his way.

Margaret Van Dorn sat looking out at a dreary world. Even the lovers by the elm tree did not quicken her pulse. Scarcely more did they interest her than her vapid adventure with Ahab Wright. All romantic adventure, personal or vicarious, was as ashes on her lips. But emotion was not all dead in her. As she gazed at Lila and Kenyon, Margaret wondered if her husband could see the pair. Her first emotional reaction was a gloating sense that he would be boiling with humiliation and rage when he saw his child so obviously

and publicly, even if unconsciously, adoring an Adams. So she exulted in the Van Dorn discomfiture. As her first spiteful impulse wore away, a sense of desolation overcame Margaret Van Dorn. Probably she had no regrets that she had abandoned Kenyon. For years she had nursed a daily horror that the door which hid her secret might swing open, but that horror was growing stale. She felt that the door was forever sealed by time. So in the midst of a world at its spring, a budding world, a world of young mating, a gay world going out on its vast yearly voyage to hunt new life in new joy, a quest for ever new yet old as God's first smile on a world unborn, this woman sat in a drab and dreary desolation. Even her spite withered as she sat playing with her tall glass. And as spite chilled, her loneliness grew.

She knew better than any one else in Harvey—better even than the Nesbits—what Kenyon Adams really promised in achievement and fame. They knew that he had some European recognition. Margaret in Europe had been amazed to see how far he was going. In New York and Boston, she knew what it meant to have her son's music on the best concert programs. Her realization of her loss increased her loneliness. But regret did not produce remorse. She was always and finally glad that the door was inexorably sealed upon her secret. She saw only her husband angered by her son's association with her husband's daughter, and when malice spent itself, she was weary and lonely and out of humor, and longed to retire to her fortification.

After Captain Morton had bowed himself away from Margaret Van Dorn, he stood at the other end of the veranda looking down toward the lake. The carpenters were quitting work for the day on the new bathing pavilion and he saw the tall figure of Grant Adams in the group. He hurried down the steps near by, and came bustling over to Grant.

"Just the man I want to see! I saw Jap chasing around the golf course with Ruthie and invited him, but he said your pa wasn't very spry and mightn't be uptown tomorrow, so you just tell him for me that you and he are to come to my party here next Tuesday night—surprise party for the girls—going to break something to them they don't know anything about—what say? Tell your pa that

his old army friend is going to send his car—my new car—great, big, busting gray battleship for your pa—makes Tom's car look like an ash cart. Don't let your pa refuse. I want to bring you all up here to the party in that car in style—you and Amos and Jap and Kenyon! eh? Say, Grant—tell me—" he wagged his head at Kenyon and Lila still loitering by the tree. "What's Kenyon's idea in loafing around so much here in Harvey? He's old enough to go to work. What say?" Grant tried to get it to the Captain that Kenyon's real job in the world was composing music, and that sometimes he tired of cities and came down to Harvey to get the sunshine and prairie grass and the woods and the waters of his childhood into his soul. But the Captain waved the idea aside, "Nothing in the fiddling business, Grant—two dollars a day and find yourself, is all the best of 'em make," protested the Captain. "Let him do like I done—get at something sound and practical early in life and 'y gory, man—look at me. What say?"

Grant did not answer, but when the Captain veered around to the subject of his party, Grant promised to bring the whole Adams family. A moment later the Captain saw the Sands's motor car on the road before them, and said:

"Excuse me, Grant—here are the Sandses—I've got to invite them—Hi there, Dan'l, come alongside." While the Captain was inviting Daniel Sands, the Doctor's electric came purring up the hill to the club house driven by Laura Van Dorn. Grant was trotting ahead to join the other carpenters who were going to the street-car station, when Laura passing, hailed him:

"Wait a minute, Grant, till I take this to father, and I'll go with you."

As Laura Van Dorn turned her car around the club house, she stopped it under the veranda overlooking the golf-course and the rolling prairie furrowed by the slowly winding stream. The afternoon sun slanting upon the landscape brought out all its beauty—its gay greens, its somber, contrasting browns, and its splashing of color from the fruit trees across the valley that blushed pink and went white in the first unsure ecstasies of new life. Then she saw Kenyon and Lila slowly walking up the knoll to the road.

The mother noted with quick instinct the way their hands jostled together as they walked. The look that flashed from their eyes when their hands touched—the look of proprietorship in each other—told Laura Van Dorn that her life's work with Lila was finished. The daughter's day of choice had come; and whatever of honesty, whatever of sense, and sentiment, whatever of courage or conscience the mother had put into the daughter's heart and mind was ready for its lifelong test. Lila had embarked on her own journey; and motherhood was ended for Laura Van Dorn.

As she looked at the girl, the mother saw herself, but she was not embittered at the sad ending of her own journey along the road which her daughter was taking. For years she had accepted as the fortunes of war, what had come to her with her marriage, and because she had the daughter, the mother knew that she was gainer after all. For to realize motherhood even with one child, was to taste the best that life held. So her face reflected, as a cloud reflects the glory of the dawn, something of the radiance that shone in the two young faces before her; and in her faith she laid small stress upon the particular one beside her daughter. Not his growing fame, not his probable good fortune, inspired her satisfaction. When she considered him at all as her daughter's lover, she only reflected on the fact that all she knew of Kenyon was honest and frank and kind. Then she dismissed him from her thoughts.

The mother standing on the hillock looking at the youth and maiden sauntering toward her, felt the serene reliance in the order of things that one has who knows that the worst life can do to a brave, wise, kind heart, is not bad. For she had felt the ruthless wrenches of the senseless wheels of fate upon her own flesh. Yet she had come from the wheels bruised, and in agony, but not broken, not beaten. Her peace of mind was not passive. It amounted to a militant pride in the strength and beauty of the soul she had equipped for the voyage. Laura Van Dorn was sure of Lila and was happy. Her eyes filled with grateful tears as she looked down upon her daughter.

Her father, toddling ahead of Mrs. Nesbit a hundred paces, reached the car first. She nodded at the young people

trudging up the slope. "Yes," said the Doctor, "we have been watching them for half an hour. Seems like the voice of the turtle is heard in the land."

The daughter alighted from the runabout, her father got in and waited for his wife. The three turned their backs on the approaching lovers and pretended not to see them. As Laura walked around the corner of the house, she found Grant waiting for her at the car station, and the two having missed the car that the other carpenters had taken, stood under the shed waiting.

"Well—Laura," he asked, "are you leaving the idle rich for the worthy poor?" She laughed and explained:

"The electric was for father and mother, and so long as I have to go down to my girls' class in South Harvey this evening for their picnic, I'm going to ride in your car, if you don't mind?"

The street car came wailing down on them and when they had taken a rear seat on the trailer together, Grant began: "I'm glad you've come just now—just to-night. I've been anxious to see you. I've got some things to talk over—mighty big things—for me. In the first place—"

"In the first place and before I forget it, let me tell you the good news. A telegram has just come from the capital to father, saying that the State supreme court had upheld his labor bill—his and your bill that went through the referendum."

" 'Referendum J.' probably was the judge who wrote the opinion," said Grant grimly. He took off his hat, and the cooling breeze of the late afternoon played with his hair, without fluttering the curly, wiry red poll, turning light yellow with the years. "Well, whoever influenced the court—I'm glad that's over. The men have been grumbling for a year and more because we couldn't get the benefits of the law. But their suits are pending—and now they ought to have their money."

As the car whined along through the prairie streets, Grant, who had started to speak twice, at last said abruptly, "I've got to cut loose." He turned around so that his eyes could meet hers and went on: "Your father and George Brotherton and a lot of our people seem to think that we can patch

things up—I mean this miserable profit system. They think by paying the workmen for accidents and with eight hours, a living wage, and all that sort of thing, we can work out the salvation of labor. I used to think that too; but it won't do, Laura—I've gone clean to the end of that road, and there's nothing in it. And I'm going to cut loose. That's what I want to see you about. There's nothing in this step-at-a-time business. I'm for the revolution!"

She showed clearly that she was surprised, and he seemed to find some opposition in her countenance, for he hurried on: "The Kingdom—I mean the Democracy of labor—is at hand; the day is at its dawn. I want to throw my weight for the coming of the Democracy."

His voice was full of emotion as he cried:

"Laura—Laura, I know what you think; you want me to wait; you want me to help on the miserable patchwork job of repairing the profit system. But I tell you—I'm for the revolution, and with all the love in my heart—I'm going to throw myself into it!"

No one sat in the seat before them, as they whirled through the lanes leading to town, and he rested his head in his hand and put his elbow on the forward seat.

"Well, what do you think of it?" he asked, looking anxiously into her troubled face. "I have been feeling strongly now for a month—waiting to see you—also waiting to be dead sure of myself. Now I am sure!" The mad light in his eye and the zealot's enthusiasm flaming in his battered face, made the woman pause a moment before she replied:

"Well," she smiled as she spoke, "don't you think you are rather rushing me off my feet? I've seen you coming up to it for some time—but I didn't know you were so far along with your conviction."

She paused and then: "Of course, Grant, the Socialists—I mean the revolutionary group—even the direct action people—have their proper place in the scheme of things—but, Grant—" she looked earnestly at him with an anxious face, "they are the scouts—the pioneers ahead of the main body of the troops! And, Grant," she spoke sadly, "that's a hard place—can't you find enough fighting back with the main body of the troops—back with the army?"

He beat the seat with his iron claw impatiently and cried: "No—no—I'm without baggage or equipment. I'm traveling light. I must go forward. They need me there. I must go where the real danger is. I must go to point the way."

"But what is the way, Grant—what is it? You don't know—any more than we do—what is beyond the next decade's fight! What is the way you are going to point out so fine and gay—what is it?" she cried.

"I don't know," he answered doggedly. "I only know I must go. The scouts never know where they are going. Every great movement has its men who set out blindly, full of faith, full of courage, full of joy, happy to fail even in showing what is not the way—if they cannot find the path. I must go," he cried passionately, "with those who leave their homes to mark the trail—perhaps a guide forward, perhaps as a warning away—but still to serve. I'm going out to preach the revolution for I know that the day of the Democracy of labor is at hand! It is all but dawning."

She saw the exultation upon him that hallowed his seamed features and she could not speak. But when she got herself in hand she said calmly: "But, Grant—that's stuff and nonsense—there is no revolution. There can be no Democracy of labor, so long as labor is what it is. We all want to help labor—we know that it needs help. But there can be no Democracy of labor until labor finds itself; until it gets capacity for handling big affairs, until it sees more clearly what is true and what is false. Just now labor is awakening, is growing conscious—a little—but, Grant, come now, my good friend, listen, be sensible, get down to earth. Can't you see your fine pioneering and your grand scouting won't help—not now?"

"And can't you understand," he replied almost angrily, "that unless I or some one else who can talk to these people does go out and preach a definite ideal, a realizable hope—even though it may not be realized, even though it may not take definite shape—they will never wake up? Can't you see, girl, that when labor is ready for the revolution—it won't need the revolution? Can't you see that unless we preach the revolution, they will never be ready for it? When the

workers can stand together, can feel class consciousness and strike altogether, can develop organizing capacity enough to organize, to run their own affairs—then the need for class consciousness will pass, and the demand for the revolution will be over? Can't you see that I must go out blindly and cry discontent to these people?"

She smiled and shook her head and answered, "I don't know, Grant—I don't know."

They were coming into town, and every few blocks the car was taking on new passengers. She spoke low and almost whispered when she answered:

"I only know that I believe in you—you are my faith; you are my social gospel." She paused, hesitated, flushed slightly, and said, "Where you go I shall go, and your people shall be my people! Only do—Oh, do consider this well before you take the final step."

"Laura, I must go," he returned stubbornly. "I am going to preach the revolution of love—the Democracy of labor founded on the theory that the Holy Ghost is in every heart—poor as well as rich—rich as well as poor. I'm not going to preach against the rich—but against the system that makes a few men rich without much regard to their talent, at the expense of all the rest, without much regard to their talents."

The woman looked at him as he turned his blue eyes upon her in a kind of delirium of conviction. He hurried on as their car rattled through the town:

"We must free master as well as slave. For while there is slavery—while the profit system exists—the mind of the slave and the mind of the master will be cursed with it. There can be no love, no justice between slave and master—only deceit and violence on each side, and I'm going out to preach the revolution—to call for the end to a system that keeps love out of the world."

"Well, then, Grant," said the woman as the car jangled its way down Market Street, "hurrah for the revolution."

She smiled up at him, and they rode without speaking until they reached South Harvey. He left her at the door of her kindergarten, and a group of young girls, waiting for her, surrounded her.

When he reached his office, he found Violet Hogan working at her desk.

"You'll find all your mail opened, and I've noted the things that have been attended to," she said, as she turned to him. "I'm due over to the girls' class with Miss Laura—I'm helping her to-night with her picnic."

Grant nodded, and fell to his work. Violet went on:

"The letters for your signature are here on my desk. Money seems to be coming in. New local showing up down in Magnus—from the tile works." She rose, put on her coat and hat, and said as she stood in the door, "To-morrow will be your day in—won't it?" He nodded at his work, and she called out, "Well,—bye, bye—I'll be in about noon."

Daylight faded and he turned on the electric above his desk and was going over his work, making notations on letters for Violet, when he heard a footstep on the stairs. He recognized the familiar step of Henry Fenn.

"Come in—come in, Henry," cried Grant.

Fenn appeared, saw Grant at his work, slipped into a chair, and said:

"Now go right on—don't mind me, young man." Fenn pulled a newspaper from his cheap neat coat, and sat reading it, under a light that he made for himself at Violet's desk. The light fell on his thin whitening hair—still coarse, and close cropped. In his clean, washed-out face there was the faded glow of the man who had been the rising young attorney thirty years before. Grant knew that Fenn did not expect the work to stop, so he went on with it. "I'm going to supper about eight o'clock," said Grant, and asked: "Will that be all right?"

"Don't mind me," returned Fenn, and smiled with a dim reflection of the old incandescence of his youth.

Fenn's hands trembled a little, but his eyes were steady and his voice clear. His clothes were shabby but decent, and his whole appearance was that of one who is making it a point to keep up. When Grant had finished his correspondence, and was sealing up his letters, Fenn lent a hand and began:

"Well, Grant, I'm in trouble—Oh, it's not that," he

laughed as Grant looked quickly into the clean, alert old face. "That's not bothered me for—Oh, for two years now. But it's Violet—she wants me to marry her." He blurted it out as if it had been pent in, and was hard to hold.

"Why—well—what makes you—well, has she proposed, Henry?" asked the younger man.

"Naw—of course not," answered Fenn. "Boy, you don't know anything about women."

Fenn shook his head knowingly, and winked one eye slowly. "Children—she's set the children on me. You know, Grant—" he turned his smile on with what candle-power he could muster, "that's my other weakness—children. And they're the nicest children in the world. But I can't—I tell you, man, I can't," protested Mr. Fenn, as if he believed Grant in league with the woman to kidnap him.

"Well, then, don't," said Grant, rising and gathering up his mail.

"But how can I help it?" Fenn cried helplessly. "What can a man do? Those kids need a father. I need a family—I've always needed a family—but I don't want Violet—nor any one else." Grant towed him along to the restaurant, and they sat alone. After Grant had ordered his supper he asked, "Henry—why can't you marry Violet? She's a sensible, honest woman—she's got over her foolishness; what's wrong with her?"

"Why, of course, she is a good woman. If you'd see her chasing out nights—picking up girls, mothering 'em, loving 'em, working with 'em—she knows their language; she can talk to 'em so they get it. And I've known her time and again to get scent of a new girl over there at Bessie Wilson's and go after her and pull her out and start her right again. I tell you, Grant, Violet has her weaknesses—as to hair ribbons and shirtwaists and frills for the kids—but she's got a heart, Grant—a mighty big heart."

"Then why not marry her?" persisted Grant.

"That's just it," answered Fenn.

He looked hopelessly at Grant and finally said as he reached his hands across the table and grasped Grant's big flinty paw, "Grant—let me tell you something—it's Mar-

garet. I'm a *fool*—a motley fool i' the forest, Grant, but I can't help it: I can't help it," he cried. "So long as she lives—she may need me. I don't trust that damn scoundrel, Grant. She may need me, and I stand ready to go to hell itself with her if I live a thousand years. It's not that I want her any more; but, Grant—maybe you know her: maybe *you* understand. She used to hate you for some reason, and maybe that will help you to know how I feel. But—I know I'm weak—God knows I'm putty in my soul. And I'm ashamed. But I mustn't get married. It wouldn't be fair. It wouldn't be square to Violet, nor the kids, nor to any one. So long as Margaret is on this earth—it's my job to stand guard and wait till she needs me."

He turned a troubled, heartbroken face up to the younger man and concluded, "I know she despises me—that she loathes me. But I can't help it, Grant—and I came to you to kind of help me with Violet. It wouldn't be right to—well, to let this thing go on." He heaved a deep sigh, then he added as he fumbled with the red tablecloth, "What a fool a man is—Lord, what a fool!"

In the end, Grant had to agree to let Violet know, by some round about procedure devised by Mr. Fenn's legal mind, that he was not a marriageable person. At the same time, Grant had to agree not to frighten away the Hogan children.

The next morning as Grant and his father rode from their home into town, Grant told his father of the invitation to the Captain's party.

"If your mother could have lived just to see the Captain on his grand plutocratic spree, Grant—" said his father. He did not finish the sentence, but cracked the lines on the old mare's back and looked at the sky. He turned his white beard and gentle eyes upon his son and said, "There was a time last night, before you came in, when I thought I had her. Some one was greatly interested in you and some new project you have in mind. Emerson thinks well of it," said Amos, "though," he added, "Emerson thinks it won't amount to much—in practical immediate results. But I think, Grant, now of course, I can't be sure," the father rubbed his jaw and shook a meditative head, "it certainly did seem to me mother was there for a time. Something kept

bothering Emerson—calling Grantie—the way she used to —all the time he was talking!"

The father let Grant out of the buggy at the Vanderbilt House in South Harvey, and the old mare and her driver jogged up town to the *Tribune* office. There he creaked out of the buggy and went to his work. It was nine o'clock before the Captain came capering in, and the two old codgers in their seventies went into the plot of the surprise party with the enthusiam of boys.

After the Captain had explained the purpose of the surprise, Amos Adams sat with his hands on his knees and smiled. "Well—well, Ezry—I didn't realize it. Time certainly does fly. And it's all right," he added, "I'm glad you're going to do it. She certainly will approve it. And the girls—" the old man chuckled, "you surely will settle them for good and all."

He laughed a little treble laugh, cracked and yet gleeful. "Nice girls—all of 'em. But Grant says Jap's a kind of shining around your Ruth—that's the singing one, isn't it? Well, I suppose, Ezry, either of 'em might do worse. Of course, this singing one doesn't remember her mother much, so I suppose she won't be much affected by your surprise?" He asked a question, but after his manner went on, "Well, maybe it was Jap and Ruth that was bothering Mary last night. I kind of thought someway, for the first time maybe I'd get her. But nothing much came of it," he said sadly. "It's funny about the way I've never been able to get her direct, when every one else comes—isn't it?"

The Captain was in no humor for occult things, so he cut in with: "Now listen here, Amos—what do you think of me asking Mrs. Herdicker to sit at one end of the table, eh? Of course I know what the girls will think—but then," he winked with immense slyness, "that's all right. I was talking to her about it, and she's going to have a brand new dress—somepin swell—eh? By the jumping John Rogers, Amos—there's a woman—eh?"

And tightening up his necktie—a scarlet creation of much pride—he pulled his hat over his eyes, as one who has great affairs under it, and marched double-quick out of the office.

You may be sure that some kind friend told the Morton

girls of what was in store for them, the kind friend being Mr. George Brotherton, who being thoroughly married, regarded any secret from his wife in the light of a real infidelity. So he told her all that he and Market Street knew. Now the news of the party—a party in whose preparations they were to have no share, roused in the Misses Morton, and their married sister, jointly and severally, that devil of suspicion which always tormented their dreams.

"And, Emma," gasped Martha, when Emma came over for her daily visit, "just listen! Mrs. Herdicker is having the grandest dress made for the party! She told the girls in the store she had twenty-seven dollars' worth of jet on it —just jet alone." Here the handsome Miss Morton turned pale with the gravity of the news. "She told the girls to-day, this very afternoon, that she was going to take the three o'clock morning train right after the party for New York to do her fall buying. Fall buying, indeed! Fall buying," the handsome Miss Morton's voice thickened and she cried, "just because papa's got a little money, she thinks—"

But what she thought Miss Morton never said, for Mrs. Brotherton, still familiar with the gossip of the schoolhouse, cut in to say: "And, Martha, what do you think those Copini children say? They say father's got their father's orchestra to practice all the old sentimental music you ever heard of—'Silver Threads Among the Gold,' and 'Do You Love Me, Molly Darling,' and 'Lorena,' and 'Robin Adair,'— and oh," cried Mrs. Brotherton, shaking a hopeless head, "I don't know what other silly things."

"And yes, girls," exclaimed the youngest Miss Morton flippantly, "he's sent around to the Music School for Miss Howe to come and sing 'O Promise Me'!"

"The idea!" cried the new Mrs. Brotherton.

"Why, the very idea!" broke out the handsome Miss Morton, sitting by the dining-room table.

"The idea!" echoed the youngest Miss Morton, putting away her music roll, and adding in gasping excitement: "And that isn't the worst. He sent word for her to sing it just after the band had finished playing the wedding march!"

Now terror came into the house of Morton, and when the tailor's boy brought home a package, the daughters tore it open ruthlessly, and discovered—as they sat limply with it spread out in its pristine beauty on the sofa before them—a white broadcloth dinner suit—with a watered silk vest. Half an hour later, when a pleated dress shirt with pearl buttons came, it found three daughters sitting with tight lips waiting for their father—and six tigers' eyes glaring hungrily at the door through which he was expected. At six o'clock, when they heard his nimble step on the porch, they looked at one another in fear, and as he burst into the room, each looked decisively at the other as indicating a command to begin.

He came in enveloping them in one all-encompassing hug and cried:

"Well 'y gory, girls, you certainly are the three graces, the three fates, and the world, the flesh and the devil all in one—what say?"

But the Morton daughters were not to be silenced. Ruth took in a deep breath and began:

"Well, now see here, father, do you know what people are saying about—"

"Of course—I was just coming to that, Ruthie," answered the Captain. "Amos Adams he says, 'Well, Cap,' say he, 'I was talking to Cleopatra and she says Queen Victoria had a readin' to the effect that there was a boy named Amos Ezra Morton Adams over on one of the stars in the southwest corner of the milky way that would be busting into this part of the universe in about three years, more or less'—what say?"

The old man laughed and Ruth flushed red, and ran away. The Captain saw his suit lying on the sofa.

"Somepin new—" interjected the Captain. "Thought I'd kind o' bloom out; sort o' to let folks know that the old man had a little kick in him yet—eh? And now, girls—listen; let's all go out to the Country Club for dinner tonight, and I'll put on my new suit and you kind of rig up in your best, and we'll make what George calls a killing—what say?" He put his hands in his pockets and looked critically at his new clothes. The flight of Ruth had quieted

Emma, but Martha came swooping down on him with "Now, father—look here—about that Country Club party—"

The Captain shot a swift glance at Martha, and saw Emma looking at him from the kitchen door.

"What party?" he exclaimed. "Can't I ask my girls out for a little innocent dinner without its being called a party—eh? Now, you girls get your things on and come on. As for me, the limousine will be at the door at eight!"

He disappeared up the stairs and in the Morton household, two young women, woeful and heavy hearted, went about their toilets, while in the Brotherton establishment, one large fat man in suspenders felt the rush of sudden tears on his shirt front and marveled at the ways of the sex. When the Mortons were in the midst of their moist and lugubrious task, the thin, cracked little voice of the Captain called out:

"Girls—before you go, don't forget to put that cold beef on and stew it to-night for hash in the morning—eh?"

It was a beautiful party that Captain Morton gave at the Country Club house that evening. And at the end of a most gorgeously elaborate dinner, wherein were dishes whose very names the Captain did not know, he rose among his guests seated at the U-shaped table in the big dining room with the heavy brown beams in the ceiling, a little old man by his big chair, which stood beside a chair unoccupied.

"Friends," he said, "when a man gets on in his seventies, at that uncertain time, when he does not know whether to be ashamed of his years or proud of his age," he smiled at Daniel Sands, who clicked his false-teeth in appreciation of the phrase, "it would seem that thoughts of what the poet calls 'the livelier iris' on the 'burnished dove' would not inconvenience him to any great extent—eh? At seventy-five a young fellow's fancy ought to be pretty well done lightly turning to thoughts of love—what say? But by cracky—they don't."

He paused. The Morton girls in shame looked at their plates. "So, I just thought I'd have this little party to tell you about it. I wanted to surprise the girls." There was only a faint clapping of hands; for tears in the eyes of the three Morton daughters discouraged merriment.

"A man, as I was saying, never gets too old—never gets too crabbed, for what my friend Amos's friend Emerson calls 'a ruddy drop of manly blood'—eh? So, when that 'ruddy drop of manly blood' comes a surging up in me, I says I'll just about have a party for that drop of manly blood! I'm going to tell you all about it. There's a woman in my mind—a very beautiful woman; for years—a feller just as well breakdown and confess—eh?—well for years she's been in my mind pretty much all the time—particularly since Ruthie there was a baby and left alorn and alone—as you may say—eh? And so," he reached down and grasped a goblet of water firmly, and held it before him, "and so," he repeated, and his old eyes glistened and his voice broke, "as it was just fifty years ago to-night that heaven opened and let her come to me, before I marched off to war—so," he hurried along, "I give you this toast—the vacant chair—may it always, always, always be filled in my heart of hearts!"

He could not drink, but sank with his head on his arms, and when they had ceased clapping their hands, the old man looked up, signaled to the orchestra, and cried in a tight, cracked voice, "Now, dern ye—begin yer fiddlin'!"

Whereupon the three Morton daughters wept and the old ladies gathered about them and wept, and Mrs. Hilda Herdicker's ton of jet heaved as in a tidal wave, and the old men dried their eyes, and only Lila Van Dorn and Kenyon Adams, holding hands under the table, really knew what it was all about.

Now they have capered through these pages of this chapter—all of the people in this story in their love affairs. Hand in hand, they have come to the footlights, hand in hand they have walked before us. We have seen that love is a passion with many sides. It varies with each soul. In youth, in maturity, in courtship, in marriage, in widowhood, in innocence, and in the wisdom of serpents, love reflects the soul it shines on. For love is youth in the heart—youth that always beckons, that always shapes our visions. Love ever sheens and shimmers brightly from within us; but what it shows to the world—that is vastly different with each of us. For that is the shadow of his inmost being.

CHAPTER XLIII

WHEREIN WE FIND GRANT ADAMS CALLING UPON KENYON'S MOTHER, AND DARKNESS FALLS UPON TWO LOVERS

ONCE in a while an item appeared in the Harvey *Tribune* that might have been found nowhere else, and for reasons. For instance, the issue of the *Tribune* that contained the account of the Captain's party also contained this item, which Daniel Sands had kept out of every other paper in town:

"Mortimer Sands, son of D. Sands of the Traders' Bank, has returned from Arizona, where he has been seeking health. He is hopeful of ultimate recovery."

Another item of interest appeared in the same issue of the paper. It related that T. Van Dorn, former Judge of the District Court, is in Washington, D. C., on legal business.

The Adams family item, which the paper never failed to contain, was this:

"K. Adams will leave next week for New York, where his new opera, 'Rachel,' will have its first appearance next autumn. He will be missed in our midst."

And for a paper with no subscribers and no patronage, it is curious to note that the *Tribune* carried the news above mentioned to all of Harvey, and all of Harvey discussed the news. Not that the town did not know more or less of the facts as hereinabove related; but when a fact is read in print it becomes something different from a fact. It becomes a public matter, an episode in the history of the world.

In the same issue of the paper was a statement from Grant Adams that he had decided to throw his life with the Social-

ists and with that group known as the revolutionary Socialists. Grant was enough of a personage, and the declaration was short enough and interesting enough, to give it a place in the newspapers of the country for a day. In the State where he lived, the statement created some comment—mostly adverse to Dr. Nesbit, whose political association with Grant Adams had linked the Doctor's name with Grant's. Being out of power, Dr. Nesbit felt these flings. So it happened that when, the Sunday following the announcement, Grant came with his father and Kenyon in the rattling old buggy up to the Nesbit home on Elm Street, Amos Adams found a rollicking, frivolous, mischievous host—but Grant Adams found a natty, testy, sardonic old man, who made no secret of his ill-humor.

Kenyon found Lila, and the two with their music indoors made a background for the talk on the veranda. Nathan Perry, who came up for a pill or a powder for one of his flock, sat for a time on the veranda steps. For all his frivoling with the elder Adams, Nathan could see by the way the loose, wrinkled skin on the Doctor's face kept twitching when Grant spoke, that the old man had something on his mind.

"Grant," cried the Doctor, in his excited treble, "do you realize what an ornate, unnecessary, unmitigated conspicuous, and elaborate jack you've made of yourself? Do you—young man? Well, you have. Your revolution—your revolution!" shrilled the old man. "Damn sight of revolution you'll kick up charging over the country with your water-tank patriots—your—your box-car statesmen—now, won't you?"

"Here—Doctor,—come—be—"

But the Doctor would not let Grant talk. The chirrup of the shrill old voice bore in upon the younger man's protest with, "Now, you let me say my say. The world's moving along—moving pretty fast and generally to one end, and that end is to put food in the bellies, clothes on the back, and brains in the head of the working man. The whole trend of legislation all over the world has gone that way. Hell's afire, Grant—what more do you want? We've given you the inheritance tax and the income tax and direct legislation to manipulate it, and, by Ned, instead of staying with the game

and helping us work these things out in wise administration, you fly the coop, and go squawking over the country with your revolution and leave me—damn it, Grant," piped the little, high voice, sputtering with rage, "you leave me—with my linen pants on a clothes-line four miles from home!"

Then slowly the little lines began to break in his loose skin. A faint smile, then a grin and then a laugh, spread over the old face, and he wiped his watering eyes as he shook his head mournfully.

Grant was gathering himself to reply when Nate Perry rasped in with his high-keyed Yankee voice: "I guess that about covers my views, Grant—if any one should ask you."

The crusader rose in Grant: "It's you men who have no sense," he cried. "You think because I declare war on the profit system that I propose to sail out and overturn it with a few bombs over night. Look here, men; what I propose to do is to demonstrate right here in the Wahoo Valley, where there are all sorts of laboring people, skilled, unskilled, continuous, overpaid and underpaid, foreign and American—utterly unlike, incoherent, racially and industrially—that they have in them capacities for organizing; unused abilities, untried talents that will make them worthy to take a higher place in the economic scale than they now have. If I can amalgamate them, if I can weld them into a consistent, coherent labor mass—the Irish, the Slav, the Jews, the Italians, the Poles, the French, the Dutch, the Letts, and the Mexicans—put to some purpose the love of the poor for the poor, so that it will count industrially, you can't stop the revolution." He was wagging his head, waving his stump of an arm and his face showed the temperamental excitement that was in him.

"Go ahead, Grant," said Perry. "Play out all your line—show us your game."

"Well, then—here's my game. For five years we've been collecting a district strike fund—all our own, that doesn't belong to any other organization or federation anywhere. It's ours here in the Wahoo. It's independent of any state or national control. I've collected it. It's been paid because these men here in the Valley have faith in me. We have practically never spent a penny of it. There are about

ten thousand workers in the Valley—some, like the glass-blowers, are the aristocracy of labor; others, like the breaker boys, are at the bottom of the scale. But we've kept wages up, kept conditions as high as they are anywhere in the country—and we've done it without strikes. They have faith in me. So we've assessed them according to their wages, and we have on hand, with assessments and interest, over a third of a million dollars."

He looked at Perry, and nodded his head at the Doctor. "You fellows think I'm a cream-puff reformer. I'm not. Now, then—I've talked it over with our board—we are going to invest that money in land up and down the Valley—put the women and children and old men on it—in tents—during the growing season, and cultivate that land in three-acre tracts intensively. Our Belgian glassblowers and smelter men have sent for their gardeners to teach us. Now it's merely a question of getting the land and doing the preliminary organization. We want to get as much land as we can. Now, there's my game. With that kind of a layout we can win any strike we call. And we can prove to the world that labor has the cohesive coöperating faculty required to manage the factories—to take a larger share of the income of industry, if you please. That's my revolution, gentlemen. And it's going to begin right here in the Wahoo Valley."

"Well," returned Nate Perry, "your revolution looks interesting. It's got some new gears, at least."

"Go it while you're young," piped the Doctor. "In just about eighteen months, you will be coming to me to go on your bond—to keep out of jail. I've seen new-fangled revolutions peter out before."

"Just the same," replied Grant, "I've pinned my faith to these men and women. They are now working in fear of poverty. Give them hope of better things instead of fear and they will develop out of poverty, just as the middle class came out under the same stimulus."

"I don't know anything about that," interrupted Perry, "but I do know that I could take that money and put three thousand families to work on the land in the Wahoo Valley and develop the best labor in the country."

He laughed, and Grant gazed, almost flared, so eager was

his look, at Perry for a moment, and said: "When the day of the democracy of labor comes—and it will come and come soon—men like you will take leadership."

There was more high talk, and Nathan Perry went home with his pill.

When he was gone, the music from indoors came to the three men. "That's from his new opera, father," said Grant, as his attention was attracted to the violin and piano.

"Good Lord," exclaimed the Doctor, "I've heard so much of that opera that I caught myself prescribing a bar from the opening chorus for the grip the other day!"

The two elder men looked at each other, and the Doctor said, "Well, Amos—that's mostly why I asked you to come up to-day. It wasn't for the society of your amateur revolutionist—you may be sure of that."

The Doctor tempered his words with a smile, but they had pricks, and Grant winced. "I suppose we may as well consider Lila and Kenyon as before the house?"

"Kenyon came to me last night," said Grant, "wanting to know whether he should come to father first, or go to Dr. Nesbit, or—well, he wondered if it would be necessary to talk with Lila's own father." All the grimness in Grant's countenance melted as he spoke of Kenyon and the battered features softened.

"And that is what I wish to talk about, Grant," said the Doctor gently. "They don't know who Kenyon is—I mean, they don't know about his parentage." Grant looked at the floor. Slowly as the old shame revived in him, its flush rose from his neck to his face and met his tousled hair. The two old men looked seriously at one another. The Doctor emphasized the solemnity of the occasion by lighting a pipe.

"I don't know—I really don't know what is right here," he said finally. "Is it fair to Laura to let her daughter marry the son of a woman who, more than any other woman in the world, has wronged her? I'm sure Laura cherishes no malice toward Kenyon's mother. Yet, of course," the Doctor spoke deliberately and puffed between his words, "blood is blood. But I don't know how much blood is blood, I mean how much of what we call heredity in human beings is due to actual blood transmission of traits, and how much

is due to the development of traits by family environment. I'm not sure, Amos, that this boy's bad blood has not been entirely eliminated by the kindly, beautiful family environment he has had with you and yours. There seems to be nothing of the Müllers in him, but his face and his music—I take it his music is of German origin."

"I don't know—I don't know, Doctor," answered Amos. "I've tried to take him apart, and put him together again, but I can't find where the parts belong."

And so they droned on, those three wiseacres—two oldish gentlemen and a middle-aged man, thinking they could change or check or dam the course of true love. While inside at the piano on the tide of music that was washing in from God only knows what bourne where words are useless and passions speak the primitive language of souls, Lila and Kenyon were solving all the problems set for them by their elders and betters. For they lived in another world from those who established themselves in the Providence business out on the veranda. And on this earth, even in the same houses, and in the same families, there is no communication between the worlds. With our powerful lenses of memory we men and women in our forties gaze earnestly and long at the distant planets of youth, wondering if they are really inhabited by real people—or mere animals, perchance—if they have human institutions, reasonable aspirations or finite intelligences. We take temperatures, make blood counts and record blood pressure, reckon the heart-beats, and think we are wondrous wise. But wig-wag as we may, signal with what mysterious wireless of evanescent youth-fire we still hold in our blood, we get nothing but vague hints, broken reminiscences, and a certain patchwork of our own subconscious chop logic of middle age in return. There is no real communication between the worlds. Youth remains another planet—even as age and childhood are other planets.

Now, after the three wise men had considered the star glowing before them, they decided thus:

"Well," quoth the Doctor, "it seems absolutely just that Lila should know who her husband is, and that Laura should know whom her child is marrying. So far as I am concerned, I know this Adams blood; I'll trust it to breed out

any taint; but I have no right to decide for Lila; I have no right to say what Laura will do—though, Grant, I know in my heart that she would rather have her child marry yours than to have anything else come about that the world could hold for her. And yet—she should know the truth."

Grant sat with his head bowed, and his eyes on the floor, while the Doctor spoke. Without looking up, he said: "There's some one else to consider, Doctor—there's Margaret—after all, it's her son; it's her secret. It's—I don't know what her rights are—perhaps she's forfeited them. But she is at least physically his mother."

The Doctor looked up with a troubled face. He ran his hand over the place where his pompadour once used to rise, and where only a fuzz responded to the stroke of his dry palm, and answered:

"Grant—through it all—through all the tragedy that she has brought here, I've kept that secret for Margaret. And until she releases me, I can never break my silence. A doctor—one of the right sort—never could. Whatever you feel are her rights—you and she must settle. It must be you, not I, to tell this story, even to my own flesh and blood, Grant."

Grant rose and walked the long, straight stretch of the veranda. His shoulders, pugnacious, aggressive, and defiant, swayed as he walked heavily and he gazed at the floor as one in shame. Finally he whirled toward the Doctor and said:

"I'm going to his mother. I'm going now. She may have mighty few rights in this matter—she cast him off shamefully. But she has just one right here—the right to know that I shall tell her secret to Laura, and I'm going to talk to her before I tell Laura. Even if Margaret clamors against what I think is right, I shall not stop. But I'm not going to sneak her secret away without her knowing it. I suppose that's about the extent of her rights in Kenyon: to know before I tell his wife who he really is, so that Margaret will know who knows and who does not know her relation to him. It seems to me that is about the justice of the case."

The Doctor puffed at his pipe, and nodded a slow assent.

"Now's as good a time as any," answered the Doctor, and added: "By the way, Amos—I had a telegram from Wash-

ington this morning, saying that Tom is to be made Federal judge in the new district. That's what he's doing in Washington just now. He is one of those ostensible fellows," piped the Doctor. "Ostensibly he's there trying to help land another man; but Tom's the Van Dorn candidate."

He smoked until his pipe revived and added, "Well, Tom can afford it; he's got all the money he needs."

Grant, who heard the Doctor's news, did not seem to be disturbed by it. His mind was occupied with more personal matters. He stood by a pillar, looking off into the summer day.

"Well, I suppose," he looked at his clothes, brushed the dust from the top of his shoes by rubbing them separately against the calves of his legs, straightened his ready-made tie and felt of the buttons on his vest, "I suppose," he repeated, "I may just as well go now as at any other time," and he strode down the steps and made straight for the Van Dorn home.

When he came to the Van Dorn house he saw Margaret sitting alone in the deep shade of a vine-screened piazza. She wore a loose flowing purple house garment, of a bizarre pattern which accented her physical charms. But not until he had begun to mount the steps before her did he notice that she was sound asleep in a gaping and disenchanting stupor. Yet his footstep aroused her, and she started and gazed wildly at him: "Why—why—you—why, Grant!"

"Yes, Margaret," he answered as he stood hat in hand on the top step before her, ignoring her trembling and the terror in her eyes. "I've come to have a talk with you—about Kenyon."

She looked about her, listened a second, shuddered, and said with quivering facial muscles and shaky voice, "Yes—oh, yes—about Kenyon—yes—Kenyon Adams. Yes, I know."

The eyes she turned on him were dull and her face was slumped, as though the soul had gone from it. A tremor was visible in her hands, and the color was gone from her drooping lips. She stared at him for a moment, stupidly, then irritation came into her voice, as he sat unbidden in a porch chair near her. "I didn't tell you to sit down."

"No." He turned his face and caught her eyes. "But I'll be comfortable sitting down, and we've got more or less talking to do."

He could see that she was perturbed, and fear wrote itself all over her face. But he did not know that she was vainly trying to get control of herself. The power of the little brown pellets left her while she slept, and she was uncertain of herself and timid. "I—I'm sick—well—I—I—why, I can't talk to you now. Go 'way," she cried. "Go 'way, won't you, please—please go 'way, and come some other time."

"No—now's as good a time as any," he replied. "At any rate, I'll tell you what's on my mind. Mag, now pay attention." He turned his face to her. "The time has come when Lila Van Dorn and her mother must know who Kenyon is."

She looked vacantly at him, then started and chattered, "Wh-wh-wh-wha-what are you s-s-sas-saying—do you mean?"

She got up, closed the door into the house, and came tottering back and stood by her chair, as the man answered:

"I mean, Maggie, exactly what I said. Kenyon wants to marry Lila. But I think, and Doctor Nesbit thinks, that before it is settled, Lila and her mother, and you might as well include Mrs. Nesbit, must know just who their daughter is marrying—I mean what blood. Now do you get my idea?"

As he spoke, the woman, clutching at her chair back, tried to quiet her fluttering hands. But she began panting and a sickly pallor overcame her and she cried feebly: "Oh, you devil—you devil—will you never let me alone?"

He answered, "Look here, Mag—what's the matter with you? I'm only trying to play fair with you. I wouldn't tell 'em until you—"

"Ugh!" She shut her eyes. "Grant—wait a minute. I must get my medicine. I'll be back." She turned to go. "Oh, wait a minute—I'll be back in five minutes—I promise, honest to God, I'll be right back, Grant." She was at the door. As she fumbled with the screen, he nodded his assent and smiled grimly as he said, "All right, Maggie."

When he was alone, he looked about him, at the evidence of the Van Dorn money in the temple of Love. The outdoor room was furnished with luxuries he had never seen. He sniffed as though he smelled the money that was evident everywhere. Beside Margaret's chair, where she had dropped it when she went to sleep, was a book. It was a beautifully bound copy of the Memoirs of some titled harlot of the old French court. He was staring absentmindedly at the floor where the book lay when she came to the door.

She came out, sat down, looked steadily at him and began calmly: "Now, what is it you desire?"

She said "desiah," and Grant grunted as she went on: "I'm shuah no good can come and only hahm, great suffering—and Heaven knows what wrong, by this—miserable plan. What good can it do?"

Her changed attitude surprised him. "Well, now, Maggie," he returned, "since you want to talk it over sensibly, I'll tell you how we feel—at least how I feel. The chief business of any proper marriage is children. This marriage between Kenyon and Lila—if it comes—should bring forth fruit. I claim Lila has a right to know that he has my blood and yours in him before she goes into a life partnership with him."

"Oh, Grant, Grant," cried Margaret passionately, "the sum of your hair-splitting is this: that you bring shame upon your child's mother, and then cant like a Pharisee about its being for a good purpose. That's the way with you—you—you—" She could not quite finish the sentence.

She sat breathing fast, waiting for strength to come to her from the fortifying little pill. Grant picked up his hat. "Well—I've told you. That's what I came for."

She caught his arm and cried, "Sit down—haven't I a right to be heard? Hasn't a mother any rights—"

"No," cut in Grant, "not when she strangles her motherhood?"

"But how could I take my motherhood without disgracing my boy?" she asked.

He met her eyes. They were steady eyes, and were brightening. The man stared at her and answered: "When I brought him to you after mother died, a little, toddling,

motherless boy, when I wanted you to come with us to mother him—and I didn't want you, Maggie, any more than you wanted me, but I thought his right to a mother was greater than either of our rights to our choice of mates—then and there, you made your final choice."

"What does God mean," she whined, "by hounding me all my life for that one mistake!"

"Maggie—Maggie," answered the man, sitting down as she sank into a chair, "it wasn't the one mistake that has made you unhappy."

"That's twaddle," she retorted, "sheer twaddle. Don't I know how that child has been a cancer in my very heart—burning and gnawing and making me wretched? Don't I know?"

"No, you don't, Mag. If you want the truth," replied Grant bluntly, "you looked upon the boy as a curse. He has threatened you every day of your life. The very love you think you have for him, which I don't doubt for a minute, Mag, made you do a mad, foolish, infinitely cruel, spiteful thing—that night at the South Harvey riot. Perhaps you might care for Kenyon's affection now, but you can't have that even remotely. For all his interest in you is limited by the fact that you robbed Lila of her father. All your cancer and heart burnings, Mag, have been your own selfishness. Lord, woman—I know you."

He turned his hard gaze upon her and she winced. But she clearly was enjoying the quarrel. It stimulated her taut nerves. The house behind her was empty. She felt free to brawl.

"And you? And you?" she jeered. "I suppose he's made a saint of you."

The man's face softened, as he said simply, "I don't claim to be a saint, Mag. But I owe Kenyon everything I am in the world—everything."

"Well, it isn't much of a debt," she laughed.

"No," he repeated, "it's not much of a debt." After a moment he added, "Doctor Nesbit has kept this secret all these years. Now it's time to let these people know. You can see why, and the only reason I came to you—"

"You came to me, Grant," she cried, "to tell me you were going to shame me before that—that—before her—that old, yellow-haired tabby, who goes around doing good! Ugh—"

Grant stared at her blankly a full, uncomprehensive minute. Finally Margaret went on: "And I suppose the next thing you long-nosed busybodies will do will be to get chicken hearted about Tom Van Dorn's rights in the matter. Ah, you hypocrites!" she cried.

"Well, I don't know," answered Grant sternly; "if Lila should go to her father for advice—why shouldn't he have all the facts?"

Margaret rose. Her bright, glassy eyes flashed. Anger colored her face. Her bosom rose and fell as she exclaimed: "But she'll not go to him. Oh, he's perfectly foolish about her. Every time a photographer in this town takes her picture, he snoops around and gets one. He has her picture in his watch, in which he thinks she looks like the Van Dorns. When he goes away he takes her picture in a leather frame and puts it on his table in the hotel—except when I'm around." She laughed. "Ain't it funny? Ain't it funny," she chattered hysterically, "him doddering the way he does about her, and her freezing the life out of him?" She shook with mirth, and went on: "Oh, the devil's coming round for Tom Van Dorn's soul—and all there is of it—all there is of it is the little green spot where he loves this brat. The rest's all rotted out!"

She laughed foolishly. Then Grant said:

"Well, Mag—I must be going. I just thought it would be square to tell you before I go any further. About the other—the affair of Lila and her father is no concern of mine. That's for Lila and her mother to settle. But you and I and Kenyon are bound together by the deepest tie in the world, Maggie. And I had to come to you." She stared into his gnarled face, then shut her eyes, and in an instant wherein they were closed she lapsed into her favorite pose and disappeared behind her mask.

"Vurry kind of you, I'm shuah. Chahmed to have this little talk again."

He gazed at the empty face, saw the drugged eyes, and

the smirking mouth, and felt infinitely sad as a flash of her girlhood came back to his memory. "Well, good-by, Mag," he said gently, and turned and went down the steps.

The messenger boy whom Grant Adams passed as he went down the walk to the street from the Van Dorn home, put a telegram into Mrs. Van Dorn's lap. It was from Washington and read:

"Appointment as Federal Judge assured. Notify Sands. Have Calvin prepare article for Monday's *Times* and other papers."

She re-read it, held it in her hand for a time as she looked hungrily into the future.

While Grant Adams and Margaret were talking, the two old men on the porch, who once would have grappled with the problems of the great first cause, dropped into cackling reminiscences of the old days of the sixties and seventies when they were young men in their twenties and Harvey was an unbleached yellow pine stain on the prairie grass. So they forgot the flight of time, and forgot that indoors the music had stopped, and that two young voices were cooing behind the curtains. Upstairs, Laura Van Dorn and her mother, reading, tried with all their might and main to be oblivious to the fact that the music had stopped, and that certain suppressed laughs and gasps and long, silent gaps in the irregular conversation meant rather too obvious love-making for an affair which had not been formally recognized by the family. Yet the formality was all that was lacking. For if ever an affair of the heart was encouraged, was promoted, was greeted with everything but hurrahs and hosannas by the family of the lady thereunto appertaining, it was the love affair of Kenyon Adams and Lila Van Dorn.

The youth and the maiden below stairs were exceedingly happy. They went through the elaborate business of love-making, from the first touch of thrilling fingers to such passionately rapturous embraces as they might steal half watched and half tolerated, and the mounting joy in their hearts left no room for fear of the future. As they sat toying and frivoling behind the curtains of the wide living room in the Nesbit home, they saw Grant Adams's big, awk-

ward figure hurrying across the lawn. He walked with stooping shoulders and bowed head, and held his claw hand behind him in his flinty, red-haired hand.

"Where has he been?" asked Kenyon, as he peered through the open curtain, with his arm about the girl.

"I don't know. The Mortons aren't at home this afternoon; they all went out in the Captain's big car," answered the girl.

"Well,—I wonder—" mused the youth.

Lila snatched the window curtain, and closing it, whispered: "Quick—quick—we don't care—quick—they may come in when he gets on the porch."

Through a thin slit in the closed curtains they watched the gaunt figure climb the veranda steps and they heard the elders ask:

"Well?" and the younger man replied, "Nothing—nothing—" he repeated, "but heartbreak."

Then he added as he walked to the half-open door, "Doctor—it seems to me that I should go to Laura now; to Laura and her mother."

"Yes," returned the Doctor, "I suppose that is the thing to do."

Grant's hand was on the door screen, and the Doctor's eyes grew bright with emotion, as he called:

"You're a trump, boy."

The two old men looked at each other mutely and watched the door closing after him. Inside, Grant said: "Lila—ask your mother and grandmother if they can come to the Doctor's little office—I want to speak to them." After the girl had gone, Grant stood by Kenyon, with his arm about the young man, looking down at him tenderly. When he heard the women stirring above on the stairs, Grant patted Kenyon's shoulder, while the man's face twitched and the muscles of his hard jaw worked as though he were chewing a bitter cud.

The three, Grant and the mother and the mother's mother, left the lovers in such awe as love may hold in the midst of its rapture, and when the office door had closed, and the women were seated, Grant Adams, who stood holding to a chair back, spoke:

"It's about Kenyon. And I don't know, perhaps I should have spoken sooner. But I must speak now."

The two women gazed inquiringly at him with sympathetic faces. He was deeply embarrassed, and his embarrassment seemed to accentuate a kind of caste difference between them.

"Yes, Grant," said Mrs. Nesbit, "of course, we know about Lila and Kenyon. Nothing in the world could please us more than to see them happy together."

"I know, ma'am," returned Grant, twirling his chair nervously. "That's just the trouble. Maybe they can't be happy together."

"Why, Grant," exclaimed Laura, "what's to hinder?"

"Stuff!" sniffed Mrs. Nesbit.

He looked up then, and the two women could see that he flinched.

"Well,—I don't know how to say it, but you must know it." He stopped, and they saw anguish in his face. "But I—Laura," he turned to the younger woman and made a pitiful gesture with his whole hand, "do you remember back when you were a girl away at school and I stopped writing to you?"

"Yes, Grant," replied Laura, "so well—so well, and you never would say—"

"Because I had no right to," he cut in, "it was not my secret—to tell—then."

Mrs. Nesbit sat impatiently on her chair edge, as one waiting for a foolish formality to pass. She looked at the clumsy, hulky figure of a man in his ill-fitting Sunday clothes, and obviously was rather irritated at his ill-timed interjection of his own childhood affair into an entirely simple problem of true love running smoothly. But her daughter, seeing the anguish in the man's twisted face, was stricken with a terror in her heart. Laura knew that no light emotion had grappled him, and when her mother said, "Well?" sharply, the daughter rose and went to him, touching his hand gently that had been gripping the chair-back. She said, "Yes, Grant, but why do you have to tell it now?"

"Because," he answered passionately, "you should know,

and Lila should know and your mother should know. Your father and I and my father all think so."

Mrs. Nesbit sat back further in her chair. Her face showed anxiety. She looked at the two others and when Laura's eyes met her mother's, there was a warning in the daughter's glance which kept her mother silent.

"Grant," said Laura, as she stood beside the gaunt figure, on which a mantle of shame seemed to be falling, "there is nothing in the world that should be hard for you to tell me—or mother."

"It isn't you," he returned, and then lifting his face and trying to catch the elder woman's eyes, he said slowly:

"Mrs. Nesbit—I'm Kenyon's father."

He caught Laura's hand in his own, and held her from stepping back. Laura did not speak. Mrs. Nesbit gazed blankly at the two and in the silence the little mantel clock ticked into their consciousnesses. Finally the elder woman, who had grown white as some old suspicion or fatal recollection flashed through her mind, asked in an unsteady voice: "And his mother?"

"His mother was Margaret Müller, Mrs. Nesbit," answered the man.

Then anger glowed in the white face as Mrs. Nesbit rose and stepped toward the downcast man. "Do you mean to tell me you—" She did not finish, but began again, not noticing that the door behind her had let in her husband: "Do you mean to say that you have let me go on all these years nursing that—that, that—creature's child and—"

"Yes, my dear," said the Doctor, touching her arm, and taking her hand, "I have." She turned on her husband her startled, hurt face and exclaimed, "And you, Jim—you too—you too?"

"What else could I do in honor, my dear? And it has been for the best."

"No," she cried angrily; "no, see what you have brought to us, Jim—that hussy's—her, why, her very—"

The years had told upon Doctor Nesbit. He could not rise to the struggle as he could have risen a decade before. His hands were shaking and his voice broke as he replied: "Yes, my dear—I know—I know. But while she bore him,

we have formed him." To her darkening face he re
"You have formed him—and made him—you a
Adamses—with your love. And love," his soft, hig
was tender as he concluded, "love purges every
doesn't it, Bedelia?"

"Yes, father,—love is enough. Oh, Grant, G
doesn't matter—not to me. Poor—poor Margare
she has lost—what she has lost!" said the younger
as she stood close to Grant and looked deeply into
guished face. Mrs. Nesbit stood wet-eyed, and spen
wrath, looking at the three before her.

"O God—my God, forgive me—but I can't—Oh, I
Jim—I can't, I can't, not that woman's—not her—
She stopped and cried miserably, "You all know wh
and whose he is." Again she stopped and looked
ingly around. "Oh, you won't let Lila—she woul
that—not take that woman's—that woman who di
Lila's mother—Lila must not take her child—Oh, J
won't let that—"

As she spoke Mrs. Nesbit sank to a sofa near the do
turned her face to the pillow. The three who watc
turned blank, inquiring faces to one another.

"Perhaps," the Doctor began hesitatingly and imp
"Lila should—"

"What does she know—what can a child of
know," answered the grandmother from her pillow,
taint of that blood, of the devil she will transmit?
Jim—Oh, Jim—Lila's not old enough to decide. She
—she mustn't—we mustn't let her." Mrs. Nesbit ra
body and asked as one who grasps a shadow, "Won't
her to wait—to wait until she can understand?"

A question passed from face to face among th
stood beside the elder woman, and Dr. Nesbit answ
Strength—the power that came from a habit of fort
of dominating situations—came to him and he ste
his wife's side. The two stood together, facing the
pair. The Doctor spoke, not as an arbiter, but as a
cate:

"Laura, your mother has her right to be consider

All three of you; Kenyon himself, and you and Lila—she has reared. She has made you all what you are. Her wishes must be regarded now." Mrs. Nesbit rose while the Doctor was speaking. He took her hand as was his wont and turned to her, saying: "Mother, how will this do: Let's do nothing now, not to-day at any rate. You must all adjust yourselves to the facts that reveal this new relation before you can make an honest decision. When we have done that, let Laura and her mother tell Lila the truth, and let each tell the child exactly how she feels; and then, if you can bring yourself to it, leave it to her; if she will wait for a time until she understands her grandmother's point of view—very well. If not—"

"If not, mother, Lila's decision must stand." This came from Laura, who stepped over and kissed her mother's hand. The father looked tenderly at his daughter and shook his head as he answered softly: "If not—no, I shall stand with mother—she has her right—the realest right of all!"

And so it came to pass that the course of true love in the hearts of Lila Van Dorn and Kenyon Adams had its first sharp turning. And all the world was overclouded for two souls. But they were only two souls and the world is full of light. And the light falls upon men and women without much respect for class or station, for good deeds or bad deeds, for the weak or for the strong, for saints or sinners. For know well, truly beloved, that chance and circumstance fall out of the great machine of life upon us, hodge podge and helter skelter; good is not rewarded by prizes from the wheel of fortune nor bad punished by its calamities. Only as our hearts react on life, do we get happiness or misery, not from the events that follow the procession of the days.

Now for a moment let us peep through the clouds that lowered over the young souls aforesaid. Clouds in youth are vastly black; but they are never thick. And peering through those clouds, one may see the lovers, groping in the umbrage. It does not matter much to us, and far less does it matter to them how they have made their farewell meeting. It is night and they are coming from Captain Morton's.

Hand in hand they skip across the lawn, and soon are hid-

but what?" he persisted.

"We don't know now," she retu
does it matter, only we can't hurt
be for long. It can't be for long,

"We don't care now,—not to-ni
her head from his shoulder, and p
answer. It is all new—every thrill
one another's being is strange; eve
of cheeks, every pressure of arms—
tiful.

Once in life may human beings kn
knew that night. The angels lend i
are good, they let us keep it in our
not, then God sends His infinite pity

CHAPTER XLIV

IN WHICH WE SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN, WITH GEORGE BROTHERTON, AND IN GENERAL CONSIDER THE HABITANTS OF THE KINGDOM

MR. BROTHERTON had been pacing the deck of his store like the captain of a pirate ship in a storm. Nothing in the store suited him; he found Miss Calvin's high façade of hair too rococo for the attenuated lines of gray and lavender and heliotrope that had replaced the angular effects in red and black and green and brown of former years. He had asked her to tone it down to make it match the long-necked gray jars and soft copper vases that adorned the gray burlapped Serenity, and she had appeared with it slopping over her ears, "as per yours of even date!" And still he paced the deck.

He picked up Zola's "Fecundité," which he had taken from stock; tried to read it; put it down; sent for "Tom Sawyer"; got up, went after Dickens's "Christmas Books," and put them down; peeped into "Little Women," and watched the trade, as Miss Calvin handled it, occasionally dropping his book for a customer; hunted for "The Three Bears," which he found in large type with gorgeous pictures, read it, and decided that it was real literature.

Amos Adams came drifting in to borrow a book. He moved slowly, a sort of gray wraith almost discarnate and apart from things of the earth. Brotherton, looking at the old man, felt a candor one might have in addressing a state of mind. So the big voice spoke gently:

"Here, Mr. Adams," called Brotherton. "Won't you come back here and talk to me?" But the shopkeeper felt that he should put the elder man at his ease, so he added: "You're a wise guy, as the Latin fathers used to say. Anyway, if Jasper ever gets to a point where he thinks marriage will pay six per cent. over and above losses, you may be a

kind of step-uncle-in-law of mine. Tell me, Mr. Adams—what about children—do they pay? You know, I've always wanted children. But now—well, you see, I never thought but that people just kind of picked 'em off the bushes as you do huckleberries. I'm getting so that I can't look at a great crowd of people without thinking of the loneliness, suffering and self-denial that it cost to bring all of them into the world. Good Lord, man, I don't want lots of children—not now. And yet, children—children—why, if we could open a can and have 'em as we do most things, from sardines to grand opera, I'd like hundreds of them. Yet, I dunno," Mr. Brotherton wagged a thoughtful head.

But Amos Adams rejoined: "Ah, yes, George, but when you think of what it means for two people to bring a child into the world—what the journey means—the slow, inexorable journey into the valley of the shadow means for them, close together; what tenderness springs up; what sacrifices come forth; what firm knitting of lives; what new kind of love is bred—you are inclined to think maybe Providence knew what it was about when it brought children into life by the cruel path."

Mr. Brotherton nodded a sympathetic head.

"Let me tell you something, George," continued Amos. "It's through their hope of bettering the children that Grant has moved his people in the Valley out on the little garden plots. There they are—every warmish day thousands of mothers and children and old men, working their little plots of ground, trudging back to the tenements in the evening. The love of children is the one steady, unswerving passion in these lives, and Grant has nearly harnessed it, George. And it's because Nate Perry has that love that he's giving freely here for those poor folks a talent that would make him a millionaire, and is running his mines, and his big foundry with Cap Morton besides. It's perfectly splendid to see the way a common fatherhood between him and the men is making a brotherhood. Why, man," cried Amos, "it refreshes one's faith like a tragedy."

"Hello, Aunt Avey," piped the cheery voice of the little old Doctor, as he came toddling through the front door. "It's a boy—Joe Calvin the Third." The Doctor came back

to the desk where Amos was standing and took a chair, and as Amos drifted out of the store as impersonally as he came, the Doctor began to grin.

"We were just talking of children," said Brotherton with studied casualness. "You know, Doctor," Brotherton smiled abashed, "I've always thought I'd like lots of children. But now—"

"I see 'em come, and I see 'em go every day. I'm kind of getting used to death, George. But the miracle of birth grows stranger and stranger."

"So young Joe Calvin's a proud parent, is he? Boy, you say?"

"Boy," chuckled the Doctor, "and old Joe's out there having a nervous breakdown. They've had ten births in the Calvin family. I've attended all of 'em, and this is the first time old Joe's ever been allowed in the house. To-day the old lady's out there with a towel around her head, practically having that baby herself. The poor daughter-in-law hasn't seen it. You'd think she was only invited in as a sort of paying guest. And old lady Calvin comes in every few minutes and delivers homilies on the joys of large families!"

The Doctor laughed until his blue old eyes watered, and he chirped when he had his laugh out: "How soon we forget! Which, I presume, is one of God's semi-precious blessings!"

When the Doctor went out, Brotherton found the store deserted, except for Miss Calvin, who was in front. Brotherton carried a log to the fireplace, stirred up the fire, and when he had it blazing, found Laura Van Dorn standing beside him.

"Well, George," she said, "I've just been stealing away from my children in the Valley for a little visit with Emma."

"Very well, then," said Mr. Brotherton, "sit down a minute with me. Tell me, Laura—about children—are they worth it?"

She was a handsome woman, with youth still in her eyes and face, who sat beside George Brotherton, looking at the fire that March day. "George—good old friend," she said

gently, "there's nothing else in the world so worth it as children."

She hesitated before going so deeply into her soul, perhaps picking her verbal way. "George—no man ever degraded a woman more than I was degraded. Yet I brought Lila out of it, and I thank God for her, and I don't mind the price—not now." She turned to look at Mr. Brotherton inquiringly as she said: "But what I come in to talk to you about, George, was Grant. Have you noticed in the last few months—that growing—well—it's more than enthusiasm, George; it's a fanaticism. Since he has been working on the garden plan—Grant has been getting wilder and wilder in his talk about the Democracy of labor. Have you noticed it—or am I oversensitive?"

Brotherton, poking idly in the fire, did not answer at once. At length he said:

"Grant's a zealot. He's full of this prisms, prunes and peace idea, this sweetness and light revolution, this notion of hitching their hop-dreams to these three-acre plots, and preaching non-resistance. It's coming a little fast for me, Laura—just a shade too many at times. But, on the other hand—there's Nate Perry. He's as cold-blooded a Yankee as ever swindled a father—and he's helping with the scheme. He's—"

"He has no faith in the Democracy of Labor. He hoots," interrupted Laura. "What he's doing is working for a more efficient lot of laboring men, so that when the time comes when the unions shall ask and get more definite control of the factories and mines, in the way of wage-setting, and price-making, they will bring some sense with their control. He's merely looking after himself—in the last analysis; but Grant's going mad. George, he actually believes that when this thing wins here in the Valley—the peaceful strike, the rise of labor, and the theory of non-resistance—he's going over the world, and in a few years will have labor emancipated. Have you heard him—that is, recently?"

"Well, yes, a week or so ago," answered Brotherton, "and he was going it at a pretty fair clip for a minute then. Well, say—I mean—what should we do?" he asked, drumming with the poker on the hearth. "Laura," Brotherton

ran his eyes from the poker until they met her frank, gray eyes, "Grant would listen to you before he would listen to any one else on earth or in Heaven—I'm sure of that."

"Then what shall we do?" she asked. "We mustn't let him wreck himself—and all these people? What ought I—"

A shadow fell across the door, and in another moment there stood in the opening of the alcove the tall, lean figure of Thomas Van Dorn.

When Laura was gone, Van Dorn, after more or less polite circumlocution, began to unfold a plan of Market Street to buy the *Daily Times* and bring Jared Thurston back to Harvey to run it in the interests of the property owners in the town and in the Valley. Incidentally he had come to warn George on behalf of Market Street that he was harboring Grant Adams, contrary to the judgment of Market Street. But George Brotherton's heart was far from Market Street; it was out on the hill with Emma, his wife, and his mouth spoke from the place of his treasure.

"Tom—tell me, as between man and man, what do you think of children? You're sort of in the outer room of the Blue Lodge of grandfatherdom, with Lila and Kenyon getting ready for the preacher, and you ought to know, Tom—honest, man, how about it?"

A wave of self-pity enveloped the Judge. His voice broke as he answered: "George, I haven't any little girl—she never even has spoken to me about this affair that the whole town knows about. Oh, I haven't any child at all."

He looked a miserable moment at Brotherton, perhaps reviewing the years which they had lived and grown from youth to middle age together and growled: "Not a thing—not a damned thing in it—George, in all this forty years of fighting to keep ahead of the undertaker! Not a God damned thing!" And so he left the Sweet Serenity of Books and Wall Paper and went back to the treadmill of life, spitting ashes from his gray lips!

And then Daniel Sands toddled in to get the five-cent cigars which he had bought for a generation—one at a time every day, and Brotherton came to Daniel with his problem.

The old man, whose palsied head forever was denying

something, as if he had the assessor always in his mind, shut his rheumy eyes and answered: "My children—bauch—" He all but spat upon their names. "Morty—moons around reading Socialist books, with a cold in his throat and dish-water in his brains. And the other, she's married a dirty traitor and stands by him against her own flesh and blood. Ba-a-a-ch!" He showed his blue, old mouth, and cried:

"I married four women to give those children a home—and what thanks do I get? Ingrates—one a milk-sop—God, if he'd only be a Socialist and get out and throw dynamite; but he won't; he won't do a thing but sit around drooling about social justice when I want to eat my meals in peace. And he goes coughing all day and night, and grunting, and now he's wearing a pointed beard—he says it's for his throat, but I know—it's because he thinks it's romantic. And that Anne—why, she's worse," but he did not finish the sentence. His old head wagged violently. Evidently another assessor had suddenly pounced in upon his imagination. For he shuffled into the street.

Mr. Brotherton sat by the fire, leaning forward, with his fingers locked between his knees. The warning against Grant Adams that Tom Van Dorn had given him had impressed him. He knew Market Street was against Grant Adams. But he did not realize that Market Street's attitude was only a reflex of the stir in the Valley. All Market streets over the earth feel more or less acutely changes which portend in the workshops, often before those changes come. We are indeed "members one of another," and the very aspirations of those who dream of better things register in the latent fears of those who live on trade. We are so closely compact in our organization that a man may not even hope without crowding his neighbor. And in that little section of the great world which men knew as Market Street in Harvey, the surest evidence of the changing attitude of the men in the Valley toward their work, was found not in the crowds that gathered in Belgian Hall week after week to hear Grant Adams, not in the war-chest which was filling to overflowing, not in the gardens checkered upon the hillsides, but rather in the uneasiness of Market Street. The reactions were different in Market Street and in the Valley;

but it was one vision rising in the same body, each part responding according to its own impulses. Of course Market Street has its side, and George Brotherton was not blind to it. Sitting by his fire that raw March day, he realized that Market Street was never a crusader, and why. He could see that the men from whom the storekeepers bought goods on ninety days' time, 3 per cent. off for cash, were not crusaders. When a man turned up among them with a six-months' crusade for an evanescent millennium, flickering just a few years ahead, the wholesalers of the city and the retailers of Market Street nervously began thumbing over their rapidly accumulating "bills payable" and began using crisp, scratchy language toward the crusader.

It made Brotherton pause when he thought how they might involve and envelop him—as a family man. For as he sat there, the man's mind kept thinking of children. And his mind wandered to the thought of his wife and his home—and the little ones that might be. As his mind clicked back to Amos Adams, and to the strange family that would produce three boys as unlike as Grant and Jasper and Kenyon, he began to consider how far Kenyon had come for a youth in his twenties. And Brotherton realized that he might have had a child as old as Kenyon. Then Mr. Brotherton put his hands over his face and tried to stop the flying years.

A shadow fell, and Brotherton greeted Captain Morton, in a sunburst of mauve tailoring. The Captain pointed proudly to a necktie pin representing a horse jumping through a horseshoe, and cried: "What you think of it? Real diamond horseshoe nails—what say?"

"Now, Captain, sit down here," said Mr. Brotherton. "You'll do, Captain—you'll do." But the subject nearest the big man's heart would not leave it. "Cap," he said, "what about children—do they pay?"

"That's just it," put in the Captain. "That's just what I said to Emmy this morning. I was out to see her after you left and stayed until Laura Van Dorn came and chased me off. Emmy's mighty happy, George—mighty, mighty happy—eh? Her mother always was that way. I was the one that was scared." George nodded assent. "But to-day—well, we just sat there and cried—she's so happy about

it—eh? Wimmin, George, ain't scared a bit. I know 'em. I've been in their kitchins for thirty years, George, and let me tell you somepin funny," continued the Captain. "Old Ahab Wright has taken to smoking in public to get the liberal vote! Let me tell you somepin else. They've decided to put the skids under Grant Adams and his gang down in the Valley, and the other day they ran into a snag. You know Calvin & Calvin are representing the owners since Tom's got this life job, though he's got all his money invested down there and still advises 'em. Well, anyway, they decided to put a barbed-wire trocha around all the mines and the factories. Well, four carloads of wire and posts shows up down in the Valley this week, and, 'y gory, man,—they can't get a carpenter in town or down there to touch it. Grant's got 'em sewed up. But Tom says he'll fix 'em one of these days, if they get before him in his court—what say?"

"I suppose he will, Captain," replied Mr. Brotherton, and took up his theme. "But getting back to the subject of children—I've been talking all morning about 'em to all kinds of folks, and I've decided the country's for 'em. Children, Cap," Mr. Brotherton rose, put on his coat and took the Captain's arm, "children, Captain," he repeated, as they reached the sidewalk and were starting for the street car, "children, I figure it out—children are the see-ment of civilization! Well, say—thus endeth the reading of the first lesson!"

As they stood in the corner transfer shed waiting for the car, Grant Adams came up. "Say, Grant," called Brotherton, "what you goin' to do about that barbed wire trocha?"

"Oh," smiled Grant, "I've just about settled it. The boys will begin on it this afternoon. A lot of them were angry when they heard what the owners were up to, but I said, 'Here: we've got justice on our side. We claim a partnership interest in all those mines and factories down there. We contend that we who labor there now are the legatees of all the labor that's been killed and maimed and cheated by long hours and low wages down in the Valley for thirty years, and if we have a partnership right in those mines and factories, it's our business to protect them.' So I

talked the boys into putting up the trocha. I tell you, George," said Grant, and the tremor of emotion strained his voice as he spoke, "it won't be long until we'll have a partnership in that trocha, just as we'll have an interest in every hammer and bolt, and ledge and vein in the Valley. It's coming, and coming fast—the Democracy of Labor. I have faith, the men and women have faith—all over the Valley. We've found the right way—the way of peace. When labor has proved its efficiency—"

"Ah—you're crazy, Grant," snapped the Captain. "This class of people down here—these ignorant foreigners—why, they couldn't run a peanut stand—eh?"

Dick Bowman and his son came up, and not knowing a discussion was in the wind, Dick shook hands around. And after the Captain had taken his uptown car, Grant stood apart, lost in thought, but Dick said: "Well, Benny, we got here in time for the car!" Then craning his long neck, the father laughed: "Ben, here's a laboring man and his shift goes on at one—so he's in a hurry, but we'll make it."

"Dick," began Brotherton, looking at the thin shadow of a man who was hardly Brotherton's elder by half a dozen years. "Dick, you're a kind of expert father, you and Joe Calvin, and to-day Joe's a granddaddy—tell me about the kiddies—are they worth it?"

Bowman threw his head back and craned his long neck. "Not for us—not for us poor—maybe for you people here," said Bowman, who paused and counted on his fingers: "Eight born, three dead—that's too many. Joe Calvin, he's raised all his and they're doing fairly well. That's his girl in here—ain't it?" Bowman sighed. "Her and my Jean played together back in their little days; before we moved to South Harvey." He lowered his voice.

"George, mother hasn't heard from Jean for going on two year, now. She went off with a fellow; told us she married him—she was just a child—but had been working around in the factories—and, well, I don't say so, but I guess she just has got where she's ashamed to write—maybe."

His voice rose in anger as he cried: "Why didn't she have a show, like this girl of Joe's? He's no better than I. And you know my wife—well, she's no Mrs. Joe Calvin—

she's been as happy about 'em when they came as if they were princes of the blood." He stopped.

"Then there's Mugs—I dunno, George,—it seems like we tried with Mugs, but all them saloons and—well, the gambling and the women under his nose from the time he was ten years old—well, I can't make him work. Little Jack is steady enough for a boy of twenty—he's in the Company mines, and we've put Ben in this year. He is twelve—though, for Heaven's sake, don't go blabbing it; he's supposed to be fourteen. And little Betty, she's in school yet. I don't know how she'll turn out. No, George," he went on, "children for us poor, children's a mighty risky, uncertain crop. But," he smiled reflectively, "I'm right here to tell you they're lots of fun as little shavers—growing up. Why, George, you ought to hear Benny sing. Them Copinis of the Hot Dog found he had a voice, and they've taught him some dago songs." Ben was a bright-faced boy of twelve—big for his age, with snappy, brown eyes and apples of cheeks and curly hair. He slipped away to look into a store window, leaving the two men alone. Mr. Brotherton was in a mellow mood. He put his great paw on the small man's shoulder and said huskily:

"Say, Dick, honest, I'd rather have just one boy like that than the whole damn Valley—that's right!"

The car came bowling up and the South Harvey people boarded it. Grant Adams rode down into the Valley with great dreams in his soul. He talked little to the Bowmans, but looked out of the window and saw the dawn of another day. It is the curse of dreamers that they believe that when they are convinced of a truth, they who have pursued it, who have suffered for it, who have been exalted by it, they have only to pass out their truth to the world to remake the universe. But the world is made over only when the common mind sees the truth, and the common heart feels it. So the history of reform is a history of disappointment. The reform works, of course. But in working it does only the one little trick it is intended to do, and the long chain of incidental blessings which should follow, which the reformers feel must inevitably follow, wait for other reformers to bring them into being. So there is always

plenty of work for the social tinker, and no one man ever built a millennium. For God is ever jealous for our progeny, and leaves an unfinished job always on the work bench of the world.

Grant Adams believed that he had a mission to bring labor into its own. The coming of the Democracy of Labor was a real democracy to him—no mere shibboleth. And as he rode through the rows of wooden tenements, where he knew men and women were being crushed by the great industrial machine, he thought of the tents in the fields; of the women and children and of the old and the sick going out there to labor through the day to piece out the family wage and secure economic independence with wholesome, self-respecting work. It seemed to him that when he could bring the conditions that were starting in Harvey, to every great industrial center, one great job in the world would be done forever.

So he drummed his iron claw on the seat before him, put his hard hand upon his rough face, and smiled in the joy of his high faith.

Dick Bowman and his boy left Grant at the car. He waved his claw at little Ben when they parted, and sighed as he saw the little fellow scampering to shaft No. 3 of the Wahoo Fuel Company's mines. There Grant lost sight of the child, and went to his work. In two hours he and Violet Hogan had cleaned off his desk. He had promised the Wahoo Fuel Company to see that the work of constructing the trocha was started that afternoon, and when Violet had telephoned to Mechanics' Hall, Grant and a group of men went to the mines to begin on the trocha. They passed down the switch into the yards, and Grant heard a brakeman say:

"That Frisco car there has a broken brake—watch out for her."

And a switchman reply:

"Yes—I know it. I tried to get the yardmaster not to send her down. But we'll do what we can."

The brakeman on the car signaled for the engineer to pull the other cars away, and leave the Frisco car at the top of a slight grade, to be shoved down by the men when another car was needed at the loading chute. Grant walked

toward the loading chute, and a roar from the falling coal filled his ears. He saw little Ben under a car throwing back the coal falling from the faulty chute on to the ground.

Through the roar Grant heard a yell as from a man in terror. He looked back of him and saw the Frisco car coming down the grade as if shot from a monster catapult!

"The boy—the boy—!" he heard the man on the car shriek. He tried to clamber over the coal to the edge of the car, but before he could reach the side, the Frisco car had hit the loading car a terrific blow, sending it a car length down the track.

One horrible scream was all they heard from little Ben. Grant was at his side in a moment. There, stuck to the rail, were two little legs and an arm. Grant stooped, picked up the little body, pulled it loose from the tracks, and carried it, running, to the company hospital.

As Grant ran, tears fell in the little, coal-stained face, and made white splotches on the child's cheeks.

CHAPTER XLV

IN WHICH LIDA BOWMAN CONSIDERS HER UNIVERSE AND TOM VAN DORN WINS ANOTHER VICTORY

FOR a long and weary night and a day of balancing doubt, and another dull night, little Ben Bowman lay limp and crumpled on his cot—a broken lump of clay hardly more than animate. Lida Bowman, his mother, all that time sat in the hall of the hospital outside the door of his room. The stream of sorrow that winds through a hospital passed before her unheeded. Her husband came, sat with her silently for a while, went, and came again, many times. But she did not go. In the morning of the second day as she stood peering through the door crack at the child she saw his little body move in a deep sigh, and saw his black eyes open for a second and close as he smiled. Dr. Nesbit, who stood beside her, grasped her hand and led her away.

"I think the worst is over, Lida," he said, and held her hand as they walked down the hall. He sat with her in the waiting room, into which the earliest tide of visitors had not begun to flow, and promised her that if the child continued to rally from the shock, she might stand by his bed at noon. Then for the first time she wept. He stood by the window looking out at the great pillars of smoke that were smudging the dawn, at the smelter fumes that were staining the sky, at the hurrying crowd of men and women and children going into the mines, the mills, the shops, hurrying to work with the prod of fear ever in their backs—fear of the disgrace of want, fear of the shame of beggary, fear to hear some loved one ask for food or warmth or shelter and to have it not. When the great motherly body had ceased its paroxysms, he went to Mrs. Bowman and touched her shoulder.

"Lida," he said, "it isn't much—but I'm glad of one

thing. My bill is on the statutes to give people who are hurt, as Ben was, their money from the company without going to law and dividing with the lawyers. It is on the books good and tight; referred to the people and approved by them and ground clear through the state supreme court and sustained. It isn't much, Lida—Heaven knows that—but little Ben will get his money without haggling and that money will help to start him in life."

She turned a tear-swollen face to him, but again her grief overcame her. He stood with one wrinkled hand upon her broad shoulder, and with the other patted her coarse hair. When she looked up at him, again he said gently:

"I know, Lida, that money isn't what you mothers want—but—"

"But we've got to think of it, Doc Jim—that's one of the curses of poverty, but, oh, money!—It won't bring them back strong and whole—who leave us to go to work, and come back all torn and mashed."

She sat choking down the sobs that came surging up from her great bosom, and weaving to and fro as she fought back her tears. The Doctor sat beside her and took her red unshapely hands unadorned except by the thin gold wedding ring that she had worn in toil for over thirty years.

"Lida, sometimes I think only God and the doctors know how heavy women's loads are," said the Doctor.

"Ain't that so—Doc Jim!" she cried. "Ain't that the truth? I've had a long time to think these two days and nights—and I've thought it all over and all out. Here I am nearly fifty and eight times you and I have fought it out with death and brought life into this world. I'm strong—I don't mind that. I joyed at their coming, and made the others edge over at the table, and snuggle up in the bed, and we've been happy. Even the three that are dead—I'm glad they came; I'm thankful for 'em. And Dick he's been so proud of each one, and cuddled it, and muched it—"

Her voice broke and she sobbed, "Oh, little Ben—little Ben, how pappy made over his hair—he was born with hair—don't you mind, Doc Jim?"

The Doctor laughed and looked into the past as he piped, "Curliest headed little tyke, and don't you remember Laura

gave him Lila's baby things she'd saved for all those years?"

"Yes, Doc Jim—don't I? God knows, Doc, she's been a mother to the whole Valley—when I got up I found I was the twentieth woman up and down the Valley she'd given Lila's little things to—just to save our pride when she thought we would not take 'em any other way. Don't I know—all about it—and she's still doing it—God bless her, and she's been here every morning, noon and night since—since—she came with a little beef tea, or some of her own wine, or a plate of hot toast in her basket—that she made me eat. Why, if it wasn't for her and Henry and Violet and Grant—what would God's poor in this Valley do in trouble—I sure dunno."

There came an unsteady minute, when the Doctor stroked her hand and piped, "Well, Lida—you folks in the Valley don't get half the fun out of it that the others get. It's pie for them."

The woman folded her hands in her lap and sighed deeply. "Doc Jim," she began, "eight times I've brought life into this world. The three that went, went because we were poor—because we couldn't buy life for 'em. They went into the mills and the mines with Dick's muscle. One is at home, waiting till the wheels get hungry for her. Four I've fed into the mills that grind up the meat we mothers make." She stared at him wildly and cried "O God—God, Doc Jim—what justice is there in it? I've been a kind of brood-mare bearing burden carriers for Dan Sands, who has sold my blood like cheese in his market. My mother sent three boys to the war who never came back and I've heard her cry and thank God He'd let her. But my flesh and blood—the little ones that Dick and me have coddled and petted and babied—they've been fed into the wheels to make profits—profits for idlers to squander—profits to lure women to shame and men to death. That's what I've been giving my body and soul for, Doc Jim. Little Ben up there has given his legs and his arms—oh, those soft little arms and the cunning little legs I used to kiss—for what? I'll tell you—he's given them so that by saving a day's work repairing a car, some straw boss could make a showing to a superintendent, and the superintendent could make a record for econ-

ony to a president, and a president could increase dividends —dividends to be spent by idlers. And idleness makes drunkards who make harlots who make hell—and all my little boy's arms and legs will go for is for sin and shame."

The Doctor returned to the window and she cried bitterly: "Oh, you know that's the truth—the God's truth. Doc Jim. Where's my Jean? She went into the glass factory—worked twelve hours a day on a job that would have crippled her for life in another year, and then went away with that Austrian blower—and when he threw her out, she was ashamed to write—and for a long time now I've read the city papers of them women who kill themselves—hoping to find she was dead. And Mugs—you know what South Harvey's made of him—"

She rose and walked to the window. Standing beside him she cried:

"I tell you, Doc Jim—I hate it." She pointed to the great black mills and mine shafts and the piles of brick and lumber and sheet iron that stretched before her for a mile. "I hate it, and I'm going to hit it once before I die. Don't talk peace to me. I've got a right to hit it and hit it hard—and if my time ever comes—"

A visitor was shown into the room, and Mrs. Bowman ceased speaking. She was calm when the Doctor left her and at noon she stood beside the cot, and saw little Ben smile at her. Then she went away in tears. As she passed out of the door of the hospital into the street, she met Grant Adams coming in to inquire about little Ben.

"He knows me now," she said. "I suppose he'll get well —without legs—and with only one arm—I've seen them on the street selling pencils—oh, little Ben!" she cried. Then she turned on Grant in anger. "Grant Adams—go on with your revolution. I'm for it—and the quicker the better—but don't come around talking peace to me. Us mothers want to fight."

"Fighting, in the long run, will do no good, Mrs. Bowman," said Grant. "It will hurt the cause.

"But it will do us good," she answered.

"Force against force and we lose—they have the guns," he persisted.

"Well, I'd rather feed my babies to good merciful guns than to wheels," she replied, and then softened as she took his hand.

"I guess I'm mad to-day, Grant. Go on up. Maybe they'll let you look at him. He smiled at me—just as he did when Doctor Nesbit showed him to me the day he was born."

She kept back her tears with an effort, and added, "Only the Doc tried to tell me that babies don't smile. But I know better, Ben smiled—just like the one to-day."

"Well, Mrs. Bowman," rejoined Grant, "there's one comfort. Dr. Nesbit's law makes it possible for you to get your damages without going to law and dividing with some lawyer. However the Doctor and I may differ—we down here in the mines and mills must thank him for that."

"Oh, Doc Jim's all right, Grant," answered Mrs. Bowman, relapsing into her lifetime silence.

It was nearly three months later and spring was at its full, before they discharged little Ben from the hospital. But the last fortnight of his stay they had let him visit outside the hospital for a few hours daily. And to the joy of a great crowd in the Hot Dog saloon, he sat on the bar and sang his little heart out. They took him down to Belgian hall at noon, and he sang the "Marseillaise" to the crowd that gathered there. In the hospital, wherever they would let him, after he had visited the Hot Dog, he sang—sang in the big ward where he sat by a window, sang in the corridors, whenever the patients could hear him, and sang Gospel hymns in his cot at bedtime.

He was an odd little bundle, that Henry Fenn carried into the offices of the Wahoo Valley Fuel Company one afternoon in early June, with Dick Bowman following proudly, as they made the proof of the claim for compensation for the accident. The people in the offices were kind and tenderly polite to the little fellow. Henry saw that all the papers were properly made out, and the clerk in the office told Dick and Henry to call for the check next day but one—which was pay day.

So they carried little Ben away and Mrs. Bowman—though it was barely five o'clock—began fixing Ben up for

the wedding of Amos Adams and Ruth Morton. It was the first public appearance as a singer that little Ben had made at Easter. His appearance was the surprise of the session of Captain Morton supported and assisted by George Bowerman. So little Ben Bowman was smuggled behind a palm at the close of the service and permitted to sing "I Promise to Remember."

Now, explained the Captain to Mr. Bowerman in the room where he was smoking, the afternoon before the ceremony, not that I cared a whoop in Texas about Ben—enough of him. The boy sings like a canary, but it was the only excuse I could find for digging a hundred dollars to the Bowman family without making Dick and Lida think it was charity—eh?"

The wedding made a full evening for Grant. He carried little Ben in his arms out of the crowd at the church, and gathering up the Bowmans and his father, went home without stopping for the reception or for the dance or for any of the secondary attractions of the ceremony which Jasper and the Captain, each delighting in tableaux and parades, had arranged for. Little Ben's arm was clinging to Grant's neck as he piloted his party to the street car. They passed the Van Dorn home and saw old Daniel Sands come tottering down the walk from the Van Dorn home, between Ahab Wright and young Joe Calvin. Daniel Sands stumbled as he shuffled past Amos Adams and Amos put out an arm to catch Daniel. He regained his balance and without recognizing who had helped him, cackled:

"Tom's a man of his word, boys—when he promises—that settles it. Tom never lies." And his senile voice shrilled in a laugh. Then the old banker recognized Amos Adams with Grant in the moonlight. "Hi, old spook chaser," he chirped feebly, still holding to Amos Adams's arm; "sorry I couldn't get to my nevvy's wedding—Morty went. Morty's our social man," he laughed again. "But I had some other important matters—business—very important business."

The Sands' party was moving toward the Sands' limousine, which stood purring at the curb. Ahab Wright and young Joe Calvin boosted the trembling old man into the car, and

Ahab Wright slipped back and returned to the wedding reception, from which he had stolen away. Ahab was obviously embarrassed at being caught in the conference with Sands and Van Dorn, but Daniel Sands as he climbed into the car, sinking cautiously among the cushions and being swathed in robes by the chauffeur, was garrulous. He kept carping at Amos Adams who stood by with his son and the Bowmans, waiting for the street car.

"Lost your only sane son, Amos," he said. "The fool takes after you, and the fiddler after his mother—but Jap —he's real Sands—he's like me."

He laughed at his joke, and when his breath came back he went on.

"There's Morty—he's like both the fool and the fiddler—both the fool and the fiddler—and not a bit like me."

"Morty isn't very well, Daniel," said Amos Adams, ignoring all that the old man had said. "Don't you think, Daniel, you're letting that disease get too deep a hold on Morty? With all your money, Dan, I think you'd—"

"With all my money—with all my money, Amos," cried the old man, shaking his hands, "with all my money—I can just stand and wait. Amos—he's a fool, I know—but he's the only boy I've got—the only boy. And with all my money —what good will it do me? Anne won't have it—and Morty's all I've got and he's going before I do. Amos—Amos—tell me, Amos—what have I done to deserve this of God? Haven't I done as I ort? Why is this put on me?" He sat panting and blinking and shaking his ever-denying, palsied head. Amos did not reply. The chauffeur was taking his seat in the car. "Ain't I paid my share in the church? Ain't I give parks to the city? Ain't I had family prayers for fifty years? Ain't I been a praying member all my life nearly? Ain't I supported missions? Why," he panted, "is it put on me to die without a son to bear my name and take care of my property? I made over two millions to him the other day. But why, Amos," the old man's voice was broken and he whimpered, "has the Lord sent this to Morty?"

Amos did not reply, but the big voice of Grant spoke very softly: "Uncle Dan, Morty's got tuberculosis—you know

that. Tuberculosis has made you twenty per cent. interest for twenty years—those hothouses for consumption of yours in the Valley. But it's cost the poor scores and scores of lives. Morty has it." Grant's voice rose solemnly. "Vengeance is mine sayeth the Lord, I will repay. You've got your interest, and the Lord has taken his toll."

The old man showed his colorless gums as he opened a raging mouth.

"You—you—eh, you blasphemer!" He shook as with a chill and screamed, "But we've got you now—we'll fix you!"

The car for Harvey came, and the Adamses climbed in.

Amos Adams, sitting on the hard seat of the street car looking into the moonlight, considered seriously his brother-in-law, and his low estate. That he had to be helped into his limousine, that he had to be wrapped up like a baby, that his head was palsied and his hands fluttering, seemed strange and rather inexplicable to Amos. He counted Daniel a young man, four years his junior, barely seventy-nine; a man who should be in his prime. Amos did not realize that his legs had been kept supple by climbing on and off a high printer's stool hourly for fifty years, and that his body had buffeted the winds of the world unprotected all those years and had kept fit. But Daniel Sands's sad case seemed pathetic to the elder Adams and he cut into some rising stream of conversation from Grant and the Bowmans inadvertently with: "Poor Daniel—Morty doomed, and Daniel himself looking like the breaking up of a hard winter—poor Daniel! He doesn't seem to have got the hang of things in this world; he can't seem to get on some way. I'm sorry for Daniel, Grant; he might have made quite a man if he'd not been fooled by money."

Clearly Amos was meditating aloud; no one replied and the talk flowed on. But the old man looked into the moonlight and dreamed dreams.

The next day was Grant's day at his carpenter's bench, and when he came to his office with his kit in his hands at five o'clock in the afternoon, he found Violet Hogan waiting with the letters he was to sign, and with the mail opened and sorted. As he was signing his letters Violet gave him the news of the day:

"Dick Bowman ran in at noon and asked me to see if I could get Dr. Nesbit and George Brotherton and Henry Fenn down here this evening to talk over his investment of little Ben's money. The check will come to-morrow." Grant looked up from his desk, but before he could ask a question Violet answered: "They'll be down at eight. The Doctor is that proud! And Mr. Brotherton is cutting lodge —the Shriners, themselves—to come down."

It was a grave and solemn council that sat by Grant Adams's desk that evening discussing the disposal of little Ben's five thousand. Excepting Mr. Brotherton, no one there had ever handled that much money at one time. For though the Doctor was a man of affairs the money he handled in politics came easy and went easy, and the money he earned Mrs. Nesbit always had invested for him. So he and Lida Bowman sat rather apart while Dick and Brotherton considered the safety of bonds and mortgages and time deposits and other staple methods of investing the vast sum which was about to be paid to them for Ben's accident. They also considered plans for his education—whether he should learn telegraphy or should cultivate his voice, or go to college or what not. In this part of the council the Doctor took a hand. But Lida Bowman kept her wonted silence. The money could not take the bitterness from her loss; though it did relieve her despair. While they talked, as a mere incident of the conversation, some one spoke of having seen Joe Calvin come down to the Wahoo Fuel Company's offices that day in his automobile. Doctor Nesbit recalled having seen Calvin conferring with Tom Van Dorn and Daniel Sands in Van Dorn's office that afternoon. Then Dick Bowman craning his neck asked for the third time when Henry Fenn would show up; and for the third time it was explained that Henry had taken the Hogan children to the High School building in Harvey to behold the spectacle of Janice Hogan graduating from the eighth grade into the High School. Then Dick explained:

"Well, I just thought Henry would know about this paper I got to-day from the constable. It's a legal document, and probably has something to do with getting Benny's money or something. I couldn't make it out so I thought I'd just let

Henry figure on it and tell me what to do." And when a few minutes later Fenn came in, with a sense of duty to the Hogans well done, Dick handed Fenn the paper and asked with all the assurance of a man who expects the reassurance of an affirmative answer:

"Well, Henry—she's all right, ain't she? Just some legal formality to go through, I suppose?"

Henry Fenn took the document from Bowman's hand. Henry stood under the electric, read it and sat thinking for a few seconds, with widely furious eyes.

"Well," he said, "they've played their trump, boys. Doc Jim—your law's been attacked in the federal court—under Tom Van Dorn—damn him!"

The group barked a common question in many voices. Fenn replied: "As I make it out, they got a New York stockholder of the Wahoo Valley Fuel Company to ask for an injunction against paying little Ben his money to-morrow, and the temporary injunction has been granted with the hearing set for June 16."

"And won't they pay us without a suit?" asked Bowman. "Why, I don't see how that can be—they've been paying for accidents for a year now."

"Why, the law's through all the courts!" queried Brotherton.

"The state courts—yes," answered Fenn, "but they didn't own the federal court until they got Tom in."

Bowman's jaw began to tremble. His Adam's apple bobbed like a cork, and no one spoke. Finally Dr. Nesbit spoke in his high-keyed voice: "I presume legal verbiage is all they talk in hell!" and sat pondering.

"Is there no way to beat it?" asked Brotherton.

"Not in this court, George," replied Fenn, "that's why they brought suit in this court."

"That means a long fight—a big law suit, Henry?" asked Bowman.

"Unless they compromise or wear you out," replied the lawyer.

"And can't a jury decide?"

"No—it's an injunction. It's up to the court, and the court is Tom Van Dorn," said Fenn.

Then Dick Bowman spoke: "And there goes little Ben's school and a chance to make something out of what's left of him. Why, it don't look right when the legislature's passed it, and the people's confirmed it and nine lawyers in all the state courts have said it's law,—for the attorney for the company holding a job as judge to turn over all them forms of law. Can't we do something?"

"Yes," spoke the big voice of Grant Adams for the first time since Fenn made his announcement, "we can strike—that's one thing we can do. Why," he continued, full of emotion, "I could no more hold those men down there against a strike when they hear this than I could fly. They'll have to fight for this right, gentlemen!"

"Be calm now, Grant," piped the Doctor; "don't go off half cocked."

Grant's eyes flared—his nose dilated and the muscles of his heavy jaw worked and knotted. He answered in a harsh voice:

"Oh, I'll be calm all right, Doctor. I'm going down in the morning and plead for peace. But I know my people. I can't hold 'em."

Those in the room stood for a moment in dazed silence; then the Doctor and Brotherton, realizing the importance of further discussion that night, soon withdrew from the room, leaving Dick voluble in his grief and Lida, his wife, stony and speechless beside him. She shook no sympathizing hand, not even Grant's, as the Bowmans left for home. But she climbed out of the chair and down the stairs on tired, heavy feet.

In the morning there was turmoil in the Valley. In the *Times* Jared Thurston, with the fatuous blundering which characterizes all editors of papers like his, printed the news that little Ben Bowman would be denied his rights, as a glorious victory over the reformers. In an editorial, written in old Joe Calvin's best style, the community was congratulated upon having one judge at last who would put an end to the socialistic foolishness that had been written by demagogues on the state statute books, and hinting rather broadly that the social labor program adopted by the people at the last election through the direct vote would go the way of the

fool statute under which the Bowman lad hoped to cheat the courts of due process of law.

In vain did Grant Adams try to rally carpenters to the trocha. He pleaded with the men to raise a special fund to take little Ben's case through the federal courts; but he failed.

The Wahoo Valley saw in the case of little Ben Bowman the drama of greed throttling poverty, all set forth in stark, grim terms that no one could question. The story appealed directly to the passions of the Valley and the Valley's voice rose in the demand to resort to its last weapon of defense. The workers felt that they must strike or forfeit their self-respect. And day by day the *Times*, gloating at the coming downfall in Van Dorn's program of labor-repression, threw oil on the flaming passions of the Valley, so labor raged and went white hot. The council of the Wahoo Valley Trades Workers came together to vote on the strike. Every unit of seven was asked to meet and vote. Grant sat in his office with the executive committee a day and a night counting the slowly returning votes. Grant had influence enough to make them declare emphatically for a peaceful strike. But the voice of the Valley was for a strike. The spring was at its full. The little garden plots were blooming. The men felt confident. A conference of the officials of the council was called to formulate the demands. Grant managed to put off the strike until the hearing on the temporary injunction, June 16, was held. But the men drew up their demands and were ready for the court decision which they felt would be finally against them.

The Wahoo Valley was stirred deeply by the premonitions of the coming strike. It was proud of its record for industrial peace, and the prospect of war in the Valley overturned all its traditions.

Market Street had its profound reaction, too. Market Street and the Valley, each in its own way, felt the dreaded turmoil coming, knew what commercial disaster the struggle meant, but Market Street was timid and powerless and panic-stricken. Yet life went on. In the Valley there were births and deaths and marriages, and on the hill in Harvey, Mrs. Bedelia Nesbit was working out her plans to make over

the Nesbit house, while Lila, her granddaughter, was fluttering about in the seventh Heaven, for she was living under the same sky and sun and stars that bent over Kenyon, her lover, home from Boston for the Morton-Adams wedding. He might be hailed as a passing ship once or twice a day, if she managed to time her visits to Market Street properly, or he might be seen from the east veranda of her home at the proper hour, and there was a throb of joy that blotted out all the rest of the pale world. There was one time; two times indeed they were, and a hope of a third, when slipping out from under the shadow of her grandmother's belligerent plumes, Lila had known the actual fleeting touch of hands; the actual feasting of eyes and the quick rapture of meeting lips at a tryst. And when Mrs. Nesbit left for Minneapolis to consult an architect, and to be gone two weeks—Harvey and the Valley and the strike slipped so far below the skyline of the two lovers that they were scarcely aware that such things were in the universe.

Kenyon could not see even the grim cast of decision mantling Grant's face. Day by day, while the votes assembled which ordered the strike, the deep abiding purpose of Grant Adams's soul rose and stood ready to master him. He and the men seemed to be coming to their decision together. As the votes indicated by a growing majority their determination, in a score of ways Grant made it evident to those about him, that for him time had fruited; the day was ready and the hour at hand for his life plans to unfold. Those nearest him knew that the season of debate for Grant Adams had passed. He was like one whose sails of destiny are set and who longs to put out into the deep and let down his nets. So he passed the long days impatiently until the hearing of the injunction in little Ben's suit arrived, and every day burned some heavier line into his face that recorded the presence of the quenchless fire of purpose in his heart.

A smiling, affable man was Judge Thomas Van Dorn in his court the morning of June 16. He had his ticket bought for Chicago and a seat in the great convention of his party assured. He walked through the court room, rather dapperly. He put his high silk hat on the bench beside him, by way of adding a certain air of easy informality to the proceedings.

His red necktie brought out every thin wrinkle in his burnished brown face and upon the pink brow threaded by a chain lightning of a scar. The old musky, emotional voice of his youth and maturity had thickened, and he talked loudly. He listened to arguments of counsel. Young Joe Calvin, representing the Fuel Company, was particularly eloquent. Henry Fenn knew that his case was hopeless, but made such reply as he could.

"Well," ent in the court before Fenn was off his feet at the close of his argument. "there's nothing to your contention. The court is familiar with those cases, cited by counsel. Either the constitution means what it says or it doesn't. This court is willing to subscribe to a fund to pay this Bowman child a just compensation. This is a case for charity and the company is always generous in its benevolence. The Socialists may have the state courts, and the people are doubtless crazy—but this court will uphold the constitution. The injunction is made permanent. The court stands adjourned."

The crowd of laborers in the court room laughed in the Judge's face. They followed Grant Adams, who with head bowed in thought walked slowly to the street car. "Well, fellows," said Grant, "here's the end. As it stands now, the law considers steel and iron in machinery more sacred than flesh and blood. The court would have allowed them to appropriate money for machines without due process of law; but it enjoins them from appropriating money for flesh and blood." He was talking to the members of the Valley Labor Council as they stood waiting for a car. "We may as well miss a car and present our demands to the Calvins. The sooner we get this thing moving, the better."

Ten minutes later the Council walked into the office of Calvin and Calvin. There sat Joseph Calvin, the elder, a ratty little man still, with a thin stringy neck and with a bald head. His small, mousy eyes blinked at the workmen. He was exceedingly polite. He admitted that he was attorney for the owners' association in the Valley, that he could if he chose speak for them in any negotiations they might desire to make with their employees, but that he was authorized to say that the owners were not ready to consider or even to receive any communication from the men upon

any subject—except as individual employees might desire to confer with superintendents or foremen in the various mines and mills.

So they walked out. At labor headquarters in South Harvey, Nathan Perry came sauntering in.

"Well, boys—let's have your agreement—I think I know what it is. We're ready to sign."

In an hour men were carrying out posters to be distributed throughout the Valley, signed by Grant Adams, chairman of the Wahoo Valley Trades Workers' Council. It read:

STRIKE STRIKE STRIKE

The managers of our mines and mills in the Wahoo Valley have refused to confer with representatives of the workers about an important matter. Therefore we order a general strike of all workers in the mines and mills in this District. Workers before leaving will see that their machines are carefully oiled, covered, and prepared to rest without injury. For we claim partnership interest in them, and should protect them and all our property in the mines and mills in this Valley. During this strike, we pledge ourselves.

To orderly conduct.

To keep out of the saloons.

To protect our property in the mines and mills.

To use our influence to restrain all violence of speech or conduct. And we make the following demands:

First. That prices of commodities turned out in this district shall not be increased to the public as a result of concessions to us in this strike, and to that end we demand.

Second. That we be allowed to have a representative in the offices of all concerns interested, said representative to have access to all books and accounts, guaranteeing to labor such increases in wages as shall be evidently just, allowing 8 per cent. dividends on stock, the payment of interest on bonds, and such sums for upkeep, maintenance, and repairs as shall not include the creation of a surplus or fund for extensions.

Third, we demand that the companies concerned shall obey all laws enacted by the state or nation to improve conditions of industry until such laws have been passed upon by the supreme courts of the state and of the United States.

Fourth, we demand that all negotiations between the employers and the workers arising out of the demands shall be conducted on behalf of the workers by the Trades Workers' Council of the Wahoo Valley or their accredited representatives.

During this strike we promise to the public righteous peace: after the strike we promise to the managers of the mines and mills efficient labor, and to the workers always justice.

STRIKE STRIKE STRIKE

CHAPTER XLVI

WHEREIN GRANT ADAMS PREACHES PEACE AND LIDA BOWMAN SPEAKS HER MIND

A WAR, being an acute stage of discussion about the ownership of property, is a war even though "the lead striker calls it a strike," and even though he proposes to conduct the acute stage of the discussion on high moral grounds. The gentleman who is being relieved of what he considers at the moment his property, has no notion of giving it up without a struggle, no matter how courteously he is addressed, nor upon what exalted grounds the discussion is ranging. It is a world-old mistake of the Have-nots to discount the value which the Haves put upon their property. The Have-nots, generally speaking, hold the property under discussion in low esteem. They have not had the property in question. They don't know what a good thing it is—except in theory. But the Haves have had the property and they will fight for it, displaying a degree of feeling that always surprises the Have-nots, and naturally weakens their regard for the high motives and disinterested citizenship of the Haves.

Now Grant Adams in the great strike in the Wahoo Valley was making the world-old mistake. He was relying upon the moral force of his argument to separate the Haves from their property. He had cared little for the property. The poor never care much for property—otherwise they would not be poor. So Grant and his followers in the Valley—and all over the world for that matter,—(for they are of the great cult who believe in a more equitable distribution of property, through a restatement of the actual values of various servants to society), went into their demands for partnership rights in the industrial property around them, in a sublime and beautiful but untenable faith that the righteousness of their

cause would win it. The afternoon when the men walked out of the mines and mills and shops, placards covered the dead walls of the Valley and the hired billboards in Harvey setting forth the claims of the men. They bought and paid for twenty thousand copies of Amos Adams's *Tribune*, and distributed it in every home in the district, setting forth their reasons for striking. Great posters were spread over the town and in the Valley declaring "the rule of this strike is to be square, and to be square means that the strikers will do as they would be done by. There will be no violence."

Now it would seem that coming to the discussion with these obviously high motives, and such fair promises, the strikers would have been met by similarly altruistic methods. But instead, the next morning at half past six, when a thousand strikers appeared bearing large white badges inscribed with the words, "We stand for peace and law and order," and when the strikers appeared before the entrance to the shaft houses and the gates and doors of the smelters and mills, to beg men and women not to fill the vacant places at the mills and mines, the white-badged brigade was met with five hundred policemen who rudely ordered the strikers to move on.

The Haves were exhibiting feeling in the matter. But the mines and mills did not open; not enough strike-breakers appeared. So that afternoon, a great procession of white-badged men and white-clad women and children, formed in South Harvey, and, headed by the Foley Brass Band, marched through Market Street and for five miles through the streets of Harvey singing. Upon a platform carried by eight white-clad mothers, sat little Ben Bowman swathed in white, waving a white flag in his hand, and leading the singing. Over the chair on which he sat were these words on a great banner. "For his legal rights and for all such as he we demand that the law be enforced."

For two hours the procession wormed through Harvey. The streets were crowded to watch it. It made its impression on the town. The elder Calvin watched it with Mayor Ahab Wright, in festal side whiskers, from the office of Calvin & Calvin. Young Joe Calvin from time to time came and looked over their shoulders. But he was for the most part too busily engaged, making out commissions for deputy sheriffs and

extra policemen, to watch the parade. As the parade came back headed for South Harvey, the ear of the young man caught a familiar tune. He watched Ahab Wright and his father to see if they recognized it. The placid face of the Mayor betrayed no more consciousness of the air than did his immaculate white necktie. The elder Calvin's face showed no appreciative wrinkles. The band passed down the street roaring the battle hymn of labor that has become so familiar all over the world. The great procession paused uncovered in the street, while Little Ben waved his flag and raised his clear, boyish voice with its clarion note and sang, as the procession waved back. And at the spectacle of the crippled child, waving his one little arm, and lifting his voice in a lusty strain, the sidewalk crowd cheered and those who knew the tune joined.

Young Joe Calvin stood with his hands on the shoulders of the two sitting men. "Mr. Mayor, do you know that tune?" said Young Joe.

Mr. Mayor, whose only secular tune was "Yankee Doodle," confessed his ignorance. "Listen to the words," suggested Young Joe. Old Joe put his hand to his right ear. Ahab Wright leaned forward, and the words of the old, old cry of the Reds of the Midi came surging up:

> "To arms! to arms!—ye brave!
> The avenging sword unsheathe!
> March on! March on! all hearts resolved
> On victory or death."

When Ahab Wright caught the words he was open mouthed with astonishment. "Why—why," he cried, "that—why, that is sedition. They're advocating murder!"

Young Joe Calvin's face did not betray him, and he nodded a warning head. Old Joe looked the genuine consternation which he felt.

"We can't have this, Ahab—this won't do—a few days of this and we'll have bloodshed."

It did not occur to Ahab Wright that he had been singing "Onward, Christian Soldiers," and "I Am a Soldier of the Cross," and "I'll Be Washed in the Blood of the Lamb," all of his pious life, without ever meaning anything particu-

city imaginary. He heard the war song of the revolution, and being a moral and peace-seeking man prepared to defend the flag with all the arms that had burned in John Alexander's heart for fifty years.

"I tell you Mr. Mayor, we need the troops. The Sheriff agrees with me—now you hear that," said young Joe. "Will you wait until some one is killed or worse, until a mine is flooded, before sending for them?"

"You know, Adam," put in old Joe, "the Governor said on the phone this morning not to let this situation get away from you."

The crowd was joining the singing. The words—the inspiring words of the battle chant had caught the people on the sidewalk, and a great diapason was rising:

"March on! March on!—all hearts resolved
On victory or death."

"Hear that—hear that, Ahab!" cried old Joe. "Why, the decent people up town here are going crazy—they're all singing it—and that little devil is waving a red flag with the white one!"

Ahab Wright looked and was aghast. "Doesn't that mean rebellion—anarchy—and bloodshed!" he gasped.

"It means socialism," quoth young Joe, laconically, "which is the same thing."

"Well, well! my! my! Dear me," fretted Ahab, "we mustn't let this go on."

"Shall I get the Governor on the phone—you know we have the Sheriff's order here—just waiting for you to join him?" asked young Joe.

The Haven were moving the realm of the discussion about their property from pure reason to the baser emotions.

"Look, look!" cried the Mayor. "Grant Adams is standing on that platform—and those women have to hold him up—it's shameful. Listen!"

"I want to say to my old neighbors and friends here in Harvey," cried Grant, "that in this strike we shall try with all our might, with all our hearts' best endeavors, to do unto others as we would have them do unto us. Our property in the mines and mills in this Valley, we shall protect, just as

sacredly as our partners on Wall Street would protect it. It is our property—we are the legatees of the laborers who have piled it up. You men of Harvey know that these mines represent little new capital. They were dug with the profits from the first few shafts. The smelters rose from the profits of the first smelters in the district. Where capital has builded with fresh investment—we make no specific claim, but where capital has builded here in this district from profits made in the district—profits made by reason of cheating the crippled and the killed, profits made by long deadly hours of labor, profits made by cooking men's lungs on the slag dump, profits made by choking men to death, unrequited, in cement dust, profits sweated out of the men at the glass furnaces—where capital has appropriated unjustly, we expect to appropriate justly. We shall take nothing that we do not own. This is the beginning of the rise of the Democracy of Labor—the dawn of the new day." He waved his arm and his steel claw and chanted:

"March on!—March on!—all hearts resolved,"

And in a wave of song the response came

"To victory or death."

Grant Adams flaunted his black slouch hat; then he sprang from the platform, and hurried to the front of the procession. The band struck up a lively tune and the long trail of white-clad women and white-badged men became animate.

"Well, Ahab—you heard that? That is rebellion," said old Joe, squinting his mole-like eyes. "What are you going to do about that—as the chief priest of law and order in this community?"

Five minutes later Ahab Wright, greatly impressed with the dignity of his position, and with the fact that he was talking to so superior a person as a governor, was saying:

"Yes, your excellency—yes, I wanted to tell you of our conditions here in the Valley. It's serious—quite serious." To the Governor's question the Mayor replied:

"No—no—not yet, but we want to prevent it. This man Adams—Grant Adams, you've heard about him—"

And then an instant later he continued, "Yes—that's the man, Governor—Dr. Nesbit's friend. Well, this man Adams has no respect for authority, nor for property rights, and he's stirring up the people."

Young Joe Calvin winked at his father and said during the pause,

"That's the stuff—the old man's coming across like a top."

Ahab went on: "Exactly—'false and seditious doctrines,' and I'm afraid, Governor, that it will be wise to send us some troops."

The Calvins exchanged approving nods, and young Joe, having the enthusiasm of youth in his blood, beat his desk in joyous approval of the trend of events.

"Oh, I don't know as to that," continued Ahab, answering the Governor. "We have about four thousand men—perhaps a few more out. You know how many troops can handle them."

"Tell him we'll quarter them in the various plants, Ahab," cut in old Joe, and Ahab nodded as he listened.

"Well, don't wait for the tents," he said. "Our people will quarter the men in the buildings in the centers of the disturbance. Our merchants can supply your quartermaster with everything. We have about a thousand policemen and deputy sheriffs—"

While the Mayor was listening to the Governor, Calvin senior said to his son, "Probably we'd better punch him up with that promise about the provo marshal," and young Joe interrupted:

"And, Mr. Mayor, don't forget to remind him of the promise he made to Tom Van Dorn,—about me."

Ahab nodded and listened. "Wait," he said, putting his hand over the telephone receiver, and added in a low voice to those in the room: "He was just talking about that and thinks he will not proclaim martial law until there is actual violence—which he feels will follow the coming of the troops, when the men see he is determined. He said then that he expected Captain Calvin of the Harvey Company to take charge, and the Governor will speak to the other officers

about it." Ahab paused a moment for further orders. "Well," said the elder Calvin, "I believe that's all."

"Will there be anything else to-day, Joe?" asked Ahab, unconsciously assuming his counter manner to young Joe Calvin, who replied without a smile:

"Well—no—not to-day, thank you," and Ahab went back to the Governor and ended the parley.

The *Times* the next morning with flaring headlines announced that the Governor had decided to send troops to the Wahoo Valley to protect the property in the mines and mills for the rightful owners and to prevent any further incendiary speaking and rioting such as had disgraced Market Street the day before. In an editorial the Governor was advised to proclaim martial law, as only the strictest repression would prevent the rise of anarchy and open rebellion to the authorities.

The troops came on the early morning trains, and filed into the sheds occupied by the workmen before the strike. The young militiamen immediately began pervading South Harvey, Foley and Magnus, and when the strikers lined up before the gates and doors of their former working places at seven o'clock that morning they met a brown line of youths—devil-may-care young fellows out for a lark, who liked to prod the workmen with their bayonets and who laughingly ordered the strikers to stop trying to keep the strike-breakers from going to work. The strikers were bound by their pledges to the Trades Council not to touch the strike-breakers under any circumstances. The strikers—white-badged and earnest-faced—made their campaign by lining up five on each side of a walk or path through which the strike-breakers would have to pass to their work, and crying:

"Help us, and we'll help you. Don't scab on us—keep out of the works, and we'll see that you are provided for. Join us—don't turn your backs on your fellow workers."

They would stretch out their arms in mute appeal when words failed, and they brought dozens of strike-breakers away from their work. And on the second morning of the strike not a wheel turned in the district.

All morning Grant Adams moved among the men. He

was a marked figure—with his steel claw—and he realized that he was regarded by the militiamen as an easy. A young militiaman had shot a boy in Magnus—pricked him in the leg and cut an artery. Grant tried to see the Colonel of the company to protest. But the soldier had been to the officer with his story, and Grant was told that the boy attacked the militiaman—which, considering that the boy was a child in his early teens and the man was armed and in his twenties, was unlikely. But Grant saw that his protests would not avail. He issued a statement, gave it to the press correspondents who came flocking in with the troops, and sent it to the Governor, who naturally transferred it back to the militiamen.

In the afternoon the parade started again—the women and children in white, and the men in white coats and white working caps. It formed on a common between Harvey and South Harvey, and instead of going into Harvey turned down into the Valley where it marched silently around the quiet mills and shafts and to the few tenements where the strike-breakers were lodged. A number of them were sitting at the windows and on the steps and when the strikers saw the men in the tenements, they raised their arms in mute appeal, but spoke no word. Down the Valley the procession hurried and in every town repeated this performance. The troops had gathered in Harvey and were waiting, and it was not until after three o'clock that they started after the strikers. A troop of cavalry overtook the column in Foley, and rode through the line a few times, but no one spoke, and the cavalrymen rode along the line but did not try to break it. So the third day passed without a fire in a furnace in the district.

That night Grant Adams addressed the strikers in Belgian Hall in South Harvey, in Fraternity Hall in Magnus and on a common in Foley. The burden of his message was this: "Stick—stick to the strike and to our method. If we can demonstrate the fact that we have the brains to organize, to abandon force, to maintain ourselves financially, to put our cause before our fellow workers so clearly that they will join us we can win, we can enter into the partnership in these mills that is ours by right. The Democracy of Labor is a

Democracy of Peace—only in peace, only by using the higher arts of peace under great provocation may we establish that Democracy and come into our own. Stick—stick—stick to the strike and stick to the ways of peace. Let them rally to their Colonels and their tin soldiers—and we shall not fear —for we are gathered about the Prince of Peace."

The workmen always rose to this appeal and in Foley where the Letts had worked in the slag-dump, one of them, who did not quite understand the association of words implied by the term the Prince of Peace, cried:

"Hurrah for Grant, he is the Prince of Peace," and the good natured crowd laughed and cheered the man's mistake.

But the *Times* the next morning contained this head:

"Shame on Grant Adams, Trying to Inflame Ignorant Foreigners. Declares he is the Prince of Peace and gets Applause from his Excited Dupes—Will he Claim to be Messiah?"

It was a good story—from a purely sensational viewpoint, and it was telegraphed over the country, that Grant Adams, the labor leader, was claiming to be a messiah and was rallying foreigners to him by supernatural powers. The *Times* contained a vicious editorial calling on all good citizens to stamp out the blasphemous cult that Adams was propagating. The editorial said that the authorities should not allow such a man to speak on the streets maintained by taxpayers, and that with the traitorous promises of ownership of the mines and mills backing up such a campaign, rebellion would soon be stalking the street and bloodshed such as had not been seen in America for a generation would follow. The names which the *Times* called Grant Adams indicated so much malice, that Grant felt encouraged, and believed he had the strike won, if he could keep down violence. So triumph flambeaued itself on his face. For two peaceful days had passed. And peace was his signal of victory.

But during the night a trainload of strike-breakers came from Chicago. They were quartered in the railroad yards, and Grant ordered a thousand pickets out to meet the men at daybreak. Grant called out the groups of seven and each lodging house, tenement and car on the railroad siding was parceled out to a group. Moreover, Grant threw his army

into action by ordering twenty groups into Sands Park, through which the strike-breaking smelter men would pass after the pickets had spoken to the strike-breakers in their door yards. Lining the park paths, men stood in the early morning begging working men not to go into the places made vacant by the strike. In addition to this, he posted other groups of strikers to stand near the gates and doors of the working places, begging the strike-breakers to join the strikers.

Grant Adams, in his office, was the motive power of the strike. By telephone his power was transferred all over the district. Violet Hogan and Henry Fenn were with him. Two telephones began buzzing as the first strikers went into Sands Park. Fenn, sitting by Grant, picked up the first transmitter; Violet took the other. She took the message in shorthand. Fenn translated a running jargon between breaths.

"Police down in Foley—Clubbing the Letts.—No bloodshed.—They are running back to their gardens."

"Tell the French to take their places," said Grant—"There are four French sevens—tell him to get them out right away—but not to fight the cops. Militia there?"

"No," answered Fenn, "they are guarding the mill doors, and this happened in the streets near the lodging houses."

"Mr. Adams," said Violet, reading, "there's some kind of a row in Sands Park. The cavalry is there and Ira Dooley says to tell you to clear out the Park or there will be trouble."

"Get the boys on the phone, Violet, and tell them I said leave the Park, then, and go to the shaft houses in Magnus—but to march in silence—understand?"

Fenn picked up the transmitter again, "What's that—what's that—" he cried. Then he mumbled on, "He says the cops have ax-handles and that down by the smelters they are whacking our people right and left—Three in an ambulance?—The Slavs won't take it? Cop badly hurt?" asked Fenn.

Grant Adams groaned, and put his head in his hand, and leaned on the desk. He rose up suddenly with a flaming face and said: "I'm going down there—I can stop it."

He bolted from the room and rattled down the stairs. In

a minute he came running up. "Violet—" he called to the woman who was busy at the telephone—"shut that man off and order a car for me quick—they've stolen my crank and cut every one of my tires. For God's sake be quick—I must get down to those Slavs."

In a moment Violet had shut off her interviewer, and was calling the South Harvey Garage. Henry Fenn, busy with his phone, looked up with a drawn face and cried:

"Grant—the Cossacks—the Cossacks are riding down those little Italians in Sands Park—chasing them like dogs from the paths—they say the cavalry is using whips!"

Grant stood with bowed head and arched shoulders listening. The muscles of his jaw contracted, and he snapped his teeth.

"Any one hurt?" he asked. Fenn, with the receiver to his ear went on, "The Dagoes are not fighting back—the cavalrymen are shooting in the air, but—the lines are broken—the scabs are marching to the mines through a line of soldiers—we've stopped about a third from the cars—they are forming at the upper end of the Park—our men, they—"

"Good-by," shouted Grant, as he heard a motor car whirring in the distance.

Turning out of the street he saw a line of soldiers blocking his way. He had the driver turn, and at the next corner found himself blocked in. Once more he tried, and again found himself fenced in. He jumped from the car, and ran, head down, toward the line of young fellows in khaki blocking the street. As he came up to them he straightened up, and, striking with his hook a terrific blow, the bayonet that would have stopped him, Grant caught the youth's coat in the steel claw, whirled him about and was gone in a second.

He ran through alleys and across commons until he caught a street car for the smelters. Here he heard the roar of the riot. He saw the new ax-handles of the policemen beating the air, and occasionally thudding on a man's back or head. The Slavs were crying and throwing clods and stones. Grant ran up and bellowed in his great voice:

"Quit it—break away—there, you men. Let the cops alone. Do you want to lose this strike?"

A policeman put his hand on Grant's shoulder to arrest him. Grant brushed him aside.

"Break away there, boys," he called. The Slavs were standing staring at him. Several bloody faces testified to the effectiveness of the ax-handles.

"Stand back—stand back. Get to your lines," he called, glaring at them. They fell under his spell and obeyed. When they were quiet he walked over to them, and said gently:

"It's all right, boys—grin and bear it. We'll win. You couldn't help it—I couldn't either." He smiled. "But try—try next time." The strike-breakers were huddled back of the policemen.

"Men," he shouted to the strike-breakers over the heads of the policemen, "this strike is yours as well as ours. We have money to keep you, if you will join us. Come with us—comrades—Oh, comrades, stand with us in this fight! Go in there and they'll enslave you—they'll butcher you and kill you and offer you a lawsuit for your blood. We offer you justice, if we win. Come, come," he cried, "fellow workers—comrades, help us to have peace."

The policemen formed a line into the door of the shaft house. The strike-breakers hesitated. Grant approached the line of policemen, put up his arm and his maimed hand, lifted his rough, broken face skyward and cried, "O—O—O, God, pour Thy peace into their hearts that they may have mercy on their comrades."

A silence fell, the strike-breakers began to pass through the police lines to join the strikers. At first only one at a time, then two. And then, the line broke and streamed around the policemen. A great cheer went up from the street, and Grant Adams's face twitched and his eyes filled with tears. Then he hurried away.

It was eight o'clock and the picketing for the day was done, when Grant reached his office.

"Well," said Fenn, who had Violet's notes before him, "it's considerably better than a dog fall. They haven't a smelter at work. Two shafts are working with about a third of a force, and we feel they are bluffing. The glass works

furnaces are cold. The cement mills are dead. They beat up the Italians pretty badly over in the Park."

The *Times* issued a noon extra to tell of the incident in front of the smelter, and expatiated upon the Messianic myth. A tirade against Grant Adams in black-faced type three columns wide occupied the center of the first page of the extra, and in Harvey people began to believe that he was the "Mad Mullah" that the *Times* said he was.

When Dr. Nesbit drove his electric home that noon, he found his daughter waiting for him. She stood on the front porch, with a small valise beside her. She was dressed in white and her youthful skin, fresh lips, glowing eyes and heightened color made her seem younger than the woman of forty that she was. Her father saw in her face the burning purpose to serve which had come to indicate her moments of decision. The Doctor had grown used to that look of decision and he knew that it was in some way related to South Harvey and the strike. For during her years of work in the Valley, its interests had grown to dominate her life. But the Valley and its interests had unfolded her soul to its widest reach, to its profoundest depths. And in her features were blazoned, at times, all the love and joy and strength that her life had gathered. These were the times when she wore what her father called "the Valley look." She had "the Valley look" in her face that day when she stood waiting for her father with the valise beside her—a beautiful woman.

"Father—now don't stop me, dear. I'm going to Grant. Mother will be home in a few days. I've told Lila to stay with Martha Morton when you are not here. It's always secure and tranquil up here, you know. But I'm going down in the Valley. I'm going to the strike."

"Going to the strike?" repeated her father.

"Yes," she answered, turning her earnest eyes upon him as she spoke. "It's the first duty I have on earth—to be with my people in this crisis. All these years they have borne me up; have renewed my faith; they have given me courage. Now is my turn, father. Where they go, I go also." She smiled gently and added, "I'm going to Grant."

She took her father's hands. "Father—Oh, my good friend—you understand me—Grant and me?—don't you? Every man in the crisis of his life needs a woman. I've been reading about Grant in the papers. I can see what really has happened. But he doesn't understand how what they say happens, for the next few days or weeks or months, while this strike is on, is of vastly more importance than what really happens. He lacks perspective on himself. A woman, if she is a worthy friend—gives that to a man. I'm going to Grant—to my good friend, father, and stand with him—very close, and very true, I hope!"

Trouble moved over the Doctor's face in a cloud. "I don't know about Grant, Laura," he said. "All this Messiah and Prince of Peace tomfoolery—and—"

"Why, you know it never happened, don't you, father? You know Grant is not a fool—nor mad?"

"Oh, I suppose so, Laura—but he approximates both at times," piped the father raspingly.

"Father—listen here—listen to me, dear. I know Grant—I've known him always. This is what is the matter with Grant. I don't think one act in all his life was based on a selfish or an ulterior motive. He has spent his life lavishly for others. He has given himself without let or hindrance for his ideals—he gave up power and personal glory—all for this cause of labor. He has been maimed and broken for it—has failed for it; and now you see what clouds are gathering above him—and I must go to him. I must be with him."

"But for what good, Laura?" asked her father impatiently.

"For my own soul's good and glory, dear," she answered solemnly. "To live my faith; to stand by the people with whom I have cast my lot; to share the great joy that I know is in Grant's heart—the joy of serving; to triumph in his failure if it comes to that!—to be happy—with him, as I know him no matter what chance and circumstance surround him. Oh—father—"

She looked up with brimming eyes and clasped his hand tightly while she cried: "I must go—Oh, bless me as I go—" And the father kissed her forehead.

An hour later, while Grant Adams, in his office, was giving

directions for the afternoon parade a white-clad figure brightened the doorway.

"Well, Grant, I have come to serve," she smiled, "under you."

He turned and rose and took her hands in his one flinty hand and said quietly: "We need you—we need you badly right this minute."

She answered, "Very well, then—I'm ready!"

"Well, go out and work—talk peace, don't let them fight, hold the line calm and we'll win," he said.

She started away and he cried after her, "Come to Belgian Hall to-night—we may need you there. The strike committee and the leader of each seven will be there. It will be a war council."

Out to the works went Laura Van Dorn. Mounted policemen or mounted deputies or mounted militiamen stood at every gate. As the strike-breakers came out they were surrounded by the officers of the law, who marched away with the strangers. The strikers followed, calling upon their fellow workers, stretching out pleading arms to them and at corners where the strikers were gathered in any considerable numbers, the guards rode into the crowd waving their whips. At a corner near the Park a woman stepped from the crowd and cried to the officers:

"That's my boy in there—I've got a right to talk to him."

She started to crowd between the horses, and the policemen thrust her back.

"Karl—Karl," she cried, "you come out of there; what would papa say—and you a scab."

She lifted her arms beseechingly and started toward the youth. A policeman cursed her and felled her with a club.

She lay bleeding on the street, and the strikers stood by and ground their teeth. Laura Van Dorn stooped over the woman, picked her up and helped her to walk home. But as she turned away she saw five men walk out of the ranks of the strike-breakers and join the men on the corner. A cheer went up, and two more came.

Belgian Hall was filled with workers that night—men and women. In front of the stage at a long table sat the strike committee. Before them sat the delegates from the

various "locals" and the leaders of the sevens. A thousand men and women filled the hall—men and women from every quarter of the globe. That night they had decided to admit the Jews from the Magnus paint works—the Jews whom the Russians scorned, and the Lettish people distrusted. Behind all of the delegates in a solid row around the wall stood the police, watching Grant Adams. He did not sit with the strike committee but worked his way through the crowd, talking to a group here and encouraging a man or woman there—but always restless, always fearing trouble. It was nine o'clock when the meeting opened by singing "The International." It was sung in twenty tongues, but the chorus swelled up and men and women wept as they sang.

"Oh, the Brotherhood of men
Shall be the human race."

Then the delegates reported. A Greek woman told how she had been chased by men on horseback through the woods, in the Park. A Polack man showed a torn hand that had come under an ax-handle. A Frenchman told how he had been pursued by a horseman while going for medicine for his sick child. A Portuguese told how he had brought from the ranks of the strike-breakers a big fellow worker whom he knew in New Jersey. The Germans reported that every one of their men in the Valley was out and working in his garden. Over and over young girls told of insults they had received. A mania of brutality seemed to have spread through the officers of the law. A Scotch miner's daughter showed a tear in her dress made by a soldier's bayonet—

"'In fun,' he said, but I could see na joke."

In all the speeches there was a spirit of camaraderie—of fellowship, of love. "We are one blood now," a Danish miner cried, in broken English, "we are all Americans, and America will be a brotherhood—a brotherhood in the Democracy of Labor, under the Prince of Peace." A great shout arose and the crowd called:

"Grant—Grant—Brother Grant."

But he stood by the table and shook his head. After a girl picket and a woman—one a Welsh girl, the other a Manx miner's mother—had told how they were set upon in the

Park by the soldiers, up rose a pale, trembling woman from among the Hungarians, her brown, blotched face and her big body made the men look down or away. She spoke in broken, uncertain English.

"We haf send to picket our men and yet our boys, and they beat them down. We haf our girls send, and they come home crying. But I say to God this evening—Oh, is there nothing for me—for me carrying child, and He whisper yais —these soldiers, he haf wife, he haf mother." She paused and shook with fear and shame. "Then I say to you—call home your man—your girl so young, and we go—we women with child—we with big bellies, filled with unborn —we go—O, my God, He say we go, and this soldier—he haf wife, he haf mother—he will see;—we—we—they will not strike us down. Send us, oh, Grant, Prince of Peace, to the picket line next morning."

Her voice broke and she sat down covering her head with her skirt and weeping in excitement.

"Let me go," cried a clear voice, as a brown-eyed Welsh woman rose. "I know ten others that will go."

"I also," cried a German woman. "Let us organize to-night. We can have two hundred child-bearing women!"

"Yes, men," spoke up a trim-looking young wife from among the glassworkers, "we of old have been sacred—let us see if capital holds us sacred now—before property."

Grant leaned over to Laura and asked, "Would it do? Wouldn't they shame us for it?"

The eyes of Laura Van Dorn were filled with tears. They were streaming down her face.

"Oh, yes," she cried, "no deeper symbol of peace is in the earth than the child-bearing woman. Let her go."

Grant Adams rose and addressed the chair: "Mr. Chairman—I move that all men and all women except those chosen by these who have just spoken, be asked to keep out of the Park to-morrow morning, that all the world may know how sacred we hold this cause and with what weapons of peace we would win it."

So it was ordered, and the crowd sang the International Hymn again, and then the Marseillaise, and went home dreaming high dreams.

As Grant and Laura walked from the hall, the last to leave the meeting, after the women had finished making out their list of pickets, the streets were empty and they met—or rather failed to meet, Mrs. Dick Bowman, with Mugs in tow, who crossed the street obviously to avoid Grant and his companion.

Grant and Laura, walking briskly along and planning the next day's work, passed the smelters where the soldiers were on sentry duty. They passed the shaft houses where Harvey militiamen were bunked and guarded by sentinels. They passed the habiliments of war in a score of peaceful places.

"Grant," cried Laura, "I really think now we'll win—that the strike of peace will prove all that you have lived for."

"But if we fail," he replied, "it proves nothing—except perhaps that it was worth trying, and will be worth trying and trying and trying—until it wins!"

It was half past twelve. Grant Adams, standing before the Vanderbilt House, talking with Henry Fenn, was saying, "Well, Henry, one week of this—one week of peace—and the triumph of peace will be—"

A terrific explosion shut his mouth. Across the night he saw a red glare a few hundred feet away. An instant later it was dark again. He ran toward the place where the glare had winked out. As he turned a corner, he saw stars where there should have been shaft house No. 7 of the Wahoo Fuel Company's mines, and he knew that it had been destroyed. In it were a dozen sleeping soldiers of the Harvey Militia Company, and it flashed through his mind that Lida Bowman at last had spoken.

CHAPTER XLVII

IN WHICH GRANT ADAMS AND LAURA VAN DORN TAKE A WALK DOWN MARKET STREET AND MRS. NESBIT ACQUIRES A LONG LOST GRANDSON-IN-LAW

GRANT ADAMS and Henry Fenn were among the first to arrive at the scene of the explosion. Henry Fenn had tried to stop Grant from going so quickly, thinking his presence at the scene would raise a question of his guilt, but he cried:

"They may need me, Henry—come on—what's a quibble of guilt when a life's to save?"

When they came to the pile of débris, they saw Dick Bowman coming up—barefooted, coatless and breathless. Grant and Fenn had run less than fifteen hundred feet—Dick lived a mile from the shaft house. Grant Adams's mind flashed suspicion toward the Bowmans. He went to Dick across the wreckage and said:

"Oh, Dick—I'm sorry you didn't get here sooner."

"So am I—so am I," cried Dick, craning his long neck nervously.

"Where is Mugs?" asked Grant, as the two worked with a beam over a body—the body of handsome Fred Kollander—lying near the edge of the litter.

"He's home in bed and asleep—and so's his mother, too, Grant, sound asleep."

During the first minutes after the explosion, men near by like Grant and Fenn came running to the scene of the wrecked shaft by the scores, and as Grant and Dick Bowman spoke the streets grew black with men, workmen, policemen, soldiers, citizens, men by the hundreds came hurrying up. The great siren whistles of the water and light plants began to bellow; fire bells and church bells up in Harvey began to ring, and Grant knew that the telephone was alarming the town. Ten minutes after the explosion, while Grant was

ordering his men in the crowd to organize for the rescue, a militia colonel appeared, threw a cordon of men about the ruins and the police and soldiers took charge, forcing Grant and his men away. The first few moments after he had been thrust out of the relief work, Grant spent sending his men in the crowd to summon the members of the Council; then he turned and hurried to his office in the Vanderbilt House. For an hour he wrote. Henry Fenn came, and later Laura Van Dorn appeared, but he waved them both to silence, and without telling them what he had written he went with them to the hall where the Valley Council was waiting in a turmoil of excitement. It was after two o'clock. South Harvey was a military camp. Thousands of citizens from Harvey were hurrying about. As he passed along the street, the electric lights showed him little groups about some grief-stricken parent or brother or sister of a missing militiaman. Automobiles were roaring through the streets carrying officers, policemen, prominent citizens of Harvey. Ahab Wright and Joe Calvin and Kyle Perry were in a car with John Kollander who had come down to South Harvey to claim the body of his son, Fred. Grant saw the Sands's car with Morty in it supporting a stricken soldier. The car was halted at the corner by the press of traffic, and as Grant and Laura and Henry passed, Morty said under the din: "Grant—Grant, be careful—they are turning Heaven and earth to find your hand in this; it will be only a matter of days—maybe only hours, until they will have their witnesses hired!"

Grant nodded. The car moved on and Grant and his friends pressed through the throng to the hall where the Valley Council was waiting. There Grant stood and read what he had written. It ran thus:

"For the death by dynamite of the militiamen who perished at midnight in shaft No. 7 of the Wahoo Fuel Company's mines, I take full responsibility. I have assumed a leadership in a strike which caused these deaths. I shirk no whit of my share in this outrage. Yet I preached only peace. I pleaded for orderly conduct. I appealed to the workers to take their own not by force of arms but by the tremendous force of moral right. That ten thousand workers respected *this* appeal, I am exceedingly proud. That one out of

all the ten thousand was not convinced of the justice of our cause and the ultimate triumph by the force of righteousness I am sorry beyond words. I call upon my comrades to witness what a blow to our cause this murder has been and to stand firm in the faith that the strike must win by ways of peace.

"Yet, whoever did this deed was not entirely to blame—however it may cripple his fellow-workers. A child mangled in the mines denied his legal damages; men clubbed for telling of their wrongs to their fellow-laborers who were asked to fill their places; women on the picket line, herded like deer through the park by Cossacks whipping the fleeing creatures mercilessly; these things inflamed the mind of the man who set off the bomb; these things had their share in the murder.

"But I knew what strikes were. I know indeed what strikes still are and what this strike may be. I sorrow with those families whose boys perished by the bomb in shaft house No. 7. I grieve with the families of those who have been beaten and broken in this strike. But by all this innocent blood—blood shed by the working people—blood shed by those who ignorantly misunderstand us, I now beg you, my comrades, to stand firm in this strike. Let not this blood be shed in vain. It may be indeed that the men of the master class here have not descended as deeply as we may expect them to descend. They may feel that more blood must be spilled before they let us come into our own. But if blood is shed again, we must bleed, but let it not be upon our hands.

"Again, even in this breakdown of our high hopes for a strike without violence, I lift my voice in faith, I hail the coming victory, I proclaim that the day of the Democracy of Labor is at hand, and it shall come in peace and good will to all."

When he had finished reading his statement, he sat down and the Valley Council began to discuss it. Many objected to it; others wished to have it modified; still others agreed that it should be published as he had read it. In the end, he had his way. But in the hubbub of the discussion, Laura Van Dorn, sitting near him, asked:

"Grant, why do you take all this on your shoulders? It is not fair, and it is not true—for that matter."

He answered finally: "Well, that's what I propose to do."

He was haggard and careworn and he stared at the woman beside him with determination in his eyes. But she would not give up. Again she insisted: "The people are inflamed—terribly inflamed and in the morning they will be in no mood for this. It may put you in jail—put you where you are powerless."

He turned upon her the stubborn, emotional face that she rarely had seen but had always dreaded. He answered her: "If anything were to be gained for the comrades by waiting—I'd wait." Then his jaws closed in decision as he said: "Laura, that deed was done in blind rage by one who once risked his life to save mine. Then he acted not blindly but in the light of a radiance from the Holy Ghost in his heart! If I can help him now—can even share his shame with him—I should do it. And in this case—I think it will help the cause to make a fair confession of our weakness."

"But, Grant," cried the woman, "Grant—can't you see that the murder of these boys—these Harvey boys, the boys whose mothers and fathers and sweethearts and young wives and children are going about the streets as hourly witnesses against you and our fellow-workers here—will arouse a mob spirit that is dangerous?"

"Yes—I see that. But if anything can quell the mob spirit, frank, open-hearted confession will do it." He brushed aside her further protests and in another instant was on his feet defending his statement to the Valley Council. Ten minutes later the reporters had it.

At six o'clock in the morning posters covered South Harvey and the whole district proclaiming martial law. They were signed by Joseph Calvin, Jr., provost marshal, and they denied the right of assembly, except upon written order of the provost marshal, declared that incendiary speech would be stopped, forbade parades except under the provost marshal's inspection, and said that offenders would be tried by court-martial for all disobediences to the orders of the proclamation. The proclamation was underscored in its re-

quirements that no meeting of any kind might be held in the district or on any lot or in any building except upon written consent of the owner of the lot or building and with the permission of the provost marshal. Belgian Hall was a rented hall, and the Wahoo Fuel Company controlled most of the available town lots, leaving only the farms of the workers, that were planted thick with gardens, for even the most inoffensive meeting.

And at ten o'clock Grant Adams had signed a counter proclamation declaring that the proclamation of martial law in a time of peace was an usurpation of the constitutional rights of American citizens, and that they must refuse to recognize any authority that abridged the right of free assemblage, a free press, free speech and a trial by jury. Amos Adams sent the workers an invitation to meet in the grove below his house. Grant called a meeting for half-past twelve at the Adams homestead. It was a direct challenge.

The noon extra edition of the *Times*, under the caption, "The Governor Is Right," contained this illuminating editorial:

"Seven men dead—dynamited to death by Grant Adams; seven men dead—the flower of the youth of Harvey; seven men dead for no crime but serving their country, and Grant Adams loose, poisoning the minds of his dupes, prating about peace in public and plotting cowardly assassination in private. Of course, the Governor was right. Every good citizen of this country will commend him for prompt and vigorous action. In less than an hour after the bomb had sent the seven men of the Harvey Home Guards to eternity, the Governor had proclaimed martial law in this district, and from now on, no more incendiary language, no more damnable riots, miscalled parades will menace property, and no more criminal acts done under the cover of the jury system will disgrace this community under the leadership of this creature Adams.

"In his manifesto pulingly taking the blame for a crime last night so obviously his that mere denial would add blood to the crime itself, Adams says in extenuation that 'women were herded before the Cossacks like deer in the park,' while they were picketing. But he does not say that in the shameful cowardice so characteristic of his leadership in this labor war, he forced, by his own motion, women unfit to be seen in public, much less to fight his battles, under the hoofs of the horses in Sands Park this morning, and if the Greek woman, who claims she was dragooned should die, the fault, the crime of her death in revolting circumstances, will be upon Grant Adams's hands.

"When such a leader followed by blind zealots like the riff-raff who

are insanely trailing after this Mad Mullah who claims divine powers —save the mark—when such leaders and such human vermin as these rise in a community, the people who own property, who have built up the community, who have spent their lives making Harvey the proud industrial center that she is—the people who own property, we repeat, should organize to protect it. The Governor suspending while this warlike state exists the right of anarchists who turn it against law and order, the right of assembling, and speech and trial by jury, has set a good example. We hear from good authority that the Adams anarchists are to be aided by another association even more reckless than he and his, and that Greeley county will be flooded by bums and thugs and plug-uglies who will fill our jails and lay the burden of heavy taxes upon our people pretending to defend the rights of free speech.

"A law and order league should be organized among the business men of Harvey to rid the county of these rats breeding social disease, and if courageous hearts are needed, and extraordinary methods necessary—all honest people will uphold the patriots who rally to this cause."

At twelve o'clock crowds of working people began to swarm into Adams's grove. Five hundred horsemen were lined up at the gate. Around a temporary speaker's stand a squad of policemen was formed. The crowd stood waiting. Grant Adams did not appear. The crowd grew restless; it began to fear that he had been arrested, that there had been some mishap. Laura Van Dorn, sensing the uncertainty and discouragement of the crowd, decided to try to hold it. It seemed to her as she watched the uneasiness rising slowly to impatience in the men and women about her, that it was of much importance—tremendous importance indeed—to hold these people to their faith, not especially in Grant, though to her that seemed necessary, too, but at bottom to hold their faith firm in themselves, in their own powers to better themselves, to rise of their own endeavors, to build upon themselves! So she walked quickly to the policeman before the steps leading to the stand and said smilingly:

"Pardon me," and stepped behind him and was on the stand before he realized that he had been fooled. Her white-clad figure upon the platform attracted a thousand eyes in a second, and in a moment she was speaking:

"I am here to defend our ancient rights of meeting, speaking, and trial by jury." A policeman started for her. She

smiled and waved him back with such a dignity of mien that her very manner stopped him.

When he hesitated, knowing that she was a person of consequence in Harvey, she went on: "No cause can thrive until it maintains anew its right to speech, to assemble and to have its day in court before a jury. Every cause must fight this world-old fight—and then if it is a just cause, when it has won those ancient rights—which are not rights at all but are merely ancient battle grounds on which every cause must fight, then any cause may stand a chance to win. I think we should make it clear now that as free-born Americans, no one has a right to stop us from meeting and speaking; no one has a right to deny us jury trials. I believe the time has come when we should ignore rather definitely—" she paused, and turned to the policeman standing beside her, "we should ignore rather finally this proclamation of the provost marshal and should insist rather firmly that he shall try to enforce it."

A policeman stepped suddenly and menacingly toward her. She did not flinch. The dignity of five generations of courtly Satterthwaites rose in her as she gazed at the clumsy officer. She saw Grant Adams coming up at a side entrance to the grove. The policeman stopped. She desired to divert the policeman and the crowd from Grant Adams. The crowd tittering at the quick halt of the policeman, angered him. Again he stepped toward her. His face was reddening. The Satterthwaite dignity mounted, but the Nesbit mind guided her, and she said coldly: "All right, sir, but you must club me. I'll not give up my rights here so easily."

Three officers made a rush for her, grabbed her by the arms, and, struggling, she went off the platform, but she left Grant Adams standing upon it and a cheering crowd saw the ruse.

"I'm here," he boomed out in his great voice, "because 'the woods were man's first temples' and we'll hold them for that sacred right to-day." The police were waiting for him to put his toe across the line of defiance. "We'll transgress this order of little Joe Calvin's—why, he might as well post a trespass notice against snowslides as against this forward moving cause of labor." His voice rose, "I'm here to tell

you that under your rights as citizens of this Republic, and under your rights in the coming Democracy of Labor, I bid you tear up these martial law proclamations to kindle fires in your stoves."

He glared at the policemen and held up his hand to stop them as they came. "Listen," he cried, "I'm going to give you better evidence than that against me. I, as the leader of this strike—take this down, Mr. Stenographer, there—I'll say it slowly; I, as the leader of this movement of the Democracy of Labor, as the preacher preaching the era of good will and comradeship all over the earth, bid you, my fellow-workers, meet to preach Christ's workingman's gospel wherever you can hire a hall or rent a lot, to parade your own streets, and to bare your heads to clubs and your breasts to bullets if need be to restore in this district the right of trial by jury in times of peace. And now,"—the crowd roared its approval. He glared defiance at the policemen. He raised his voice above the din, "And now I want to tell you something more. Our property in these mills and mines—" again the crowd bellowed its joyous approval of his words and Grant's face lighted madly, "our property—the property we have earned, we must guard against the violence of the very master class themselves; for under this infernal Russian ukase of little Joe Calvin, the devil only knows what arson and loot and murder—" the crowd howled wildly; a policeman blew his whistle and when the mêlée was over Grant Adams was in the midst of the blue-coated squad marching toward the gate.

At the gate, on a pawing white horse, sat young Joe Calvin. The crowd, following the officers, came upon the first squad of policemen—the squad that took Laura Van Dorn from the stand. The two squads joined with their prisoners, and back of the officers came the yelling, hooting crowd, pushing the officers along. As the officers came up, the provost marshal cried:

"Turn them over to my men here. Men, handcuff them together." In an instant it was done.

Then the cavalry formed in two lines, and between them marched Laura Van Dorn and Grant Adams, manacled together. Up through the weed-grown commons between South

Harvey and the big town they marched under the broiling sun. The crowd trudged after them—trailing behind for the most part, but often running along by the horsemen and calling words of sympathy to Grant or reviling the soldiers.

Down Market Street they all came—soldiers, prisoners and straggling crowd. The town, prepared by telephone for the sight, stood on the streets and hurrahed for Joe Calvin. He had brought in his game, and if one trophy was a trifle out of caste for a prisoner, a bit above her station, so much the worse for her. The blood of the seven dead soldiers was crying for vengeance in Harvey—the middle-class nerve had been touched to the quick—and Market Street hooted at the prisoners, and hailed Joe Calvin on his white charger as a hero of the day.

For the mind of a crowd is a simple mind. It draws no fine distinctions. It has no memory. It enjoys primitive emotions, and takes the most rudimentary pleasures. The mind of the crowd on Market Street in Harvey that bright, hot June day, when Joe Calvin on his white steed at the head of his armed soldiers led Grant Adams and Laura Van Dorn up the street to the court house, saw as plainly as any crowd could see anything that Grant Adams was the slayer of seven mangled men, whose torn bodies the crowd had seen at the undertaker's. It saw death and violation of property rights as the fruit of Grant Adams's revolution, and if this woman, who was of Market Street socially, cared to lower herself to the level of assassins and thugs, she was getting only her deserts.

So Grant and Laura passed through the ranks of men and women whom they knew and saw eyes turned away that might have recognized them, saw faces averted to whom they might have looked for sympathy—and saw what power on a white horse can make of a mediocre man!

But Grant was not interested in power on a white horse, nor was he interested in the woman who marched with him. His face kept turning to the crowd from South Harvey that straggled beside him outside of the line of horsemen about him. Now and then Grant caught the eyes of a leader or of a friend and to such a one he would speak some earnest word

of cheer or give some belated order or message. Only once did Laura divert him from the stragglers along the way. It was when Ahab Wright ducked his head and drew down his office window in the second story of the Wright & Perry building. "At least," said Laura, "it's a lesson worth learning in human nature. I'll know how much a smile is worth after this or the mere nod of a head. Not that I need it to sustain me, Grant," she went on seriously, "so far as I'm concerned, but I can feel how it would be to—well, to some one who needed it."

Under the murmur of the crowd, Laura continued: "I know exactly with what emotion pretty little Mrs. Joe Calvin will hear of this episode."

"What?" queried Grant absently. His attention left her again, for the men from South Harvey at whom he was directing volts of courage from his blazing eyes.

"Well—she'll be scared to death for fear mother and I will cut her socially for it! She's dying to get into the inner circle, and she'll abuse little Joe for this—which," smiled Laura, "will be my revenge, and will be badly needed by little Joe." But she was talking to deaf ears.

A street car halted them before Brotherton's store for a minute. Grant looked anxiously in the door way, and saw only Miss Calvin, who turned away her head, after smiling at her brother.

"I wonder where George can be?" asked Grant.

"Don't you know?" replied Laura, looking wonderingly at him. "There's a little boy at their house!"

The crowd was hooting and cheering and the procession was just ready to turn into the court house corner, when Grant felt Laura's quick hand clasp. Grant was staring at Kenyon, white and wild-eyed, standing near them on the curb.

"Yes," he said in a low voice, "I see the poor kid."

"No—no," she cried, "look down the block—see that electric! There comes father, bringing mother back from the depot— Oh, Grant—I don't mind for me, I don't mind much for father—but mother—won't some one turn them up that street! Oh, Grant—Grant, look!"

Less than one hundred feet before them the electric run-

about was beginning to wobble unsteadily. The guiding hand was trembling and nervous. Mrs. Nesbit, leaning forward with horror in her face, was clutching at her husband's arm, forgetful of the danger she was running. The old Doctor's eyes were wide and staring. He bore unsteadily down upon the procession, and a few feet from the head of the line, he jumped from the machine. He was an old man, and every year of his seventy-five years dragged at his legs, and clutched his shaking arms.

"Joe Calvin—you devil," he screamed, and drew back his cane, "let her go—let her go."

The crowd stood mute. A blow from the cane cracked on the young legs as the Doctor cried:

"Oh, you coward—" and again lifted his cane. Joe Calvin tried to back the prancing horse away. The blow hit the horse on the face, and it reared, and for a second, while the crowd looked away in horror, lunged above the helpless old man. Then, losing balance, the great white horse fell upon the Doctor; but as the hoofs grazed his face, Kenyon Adams had the old man round the waist and flung him aside. But Kenyon went down under the horse. Calvin turned his horse; some one picked up the fainting youth, and he was beside Mrs. Nesbit in the car a moment later, a limp, unconscious thing. Grant and Laura ran to the car. Dr. Nesbit stood dazed and impotent—an old man whose glory was of yesterday—a weak old man, scorned and helpless. He turned away trembling with a nervous palsy, and when he reached the side of the machine, his daughter, trying to hide her manacled hand, kissed him and said soothingly:

"It's all right, father—young Joe's vexed at something I said down in the Valley; he'll get over it in an hour. Then I'll come home."

"And," gasped Mrs. Nesbit, "he—that whippersnapper," she gulped, "dared—to lay hands on you; to—"

Laura shook her head, to stop her mother from speaking of the handcuff,—"to make you walk through Market Street —while," but she could get no further. The crowd surrounded them. And in the midst of the jostling and milling, the Doctor's instinct rose stronger than his rage. He was fumbling for his medicine case, and trying to find some-

thing for Kenyon. The old hands were at the young pulse, and he said unsteadily:

"He'll be around in a few minutes."

Some one in the crowd offered a big automobile. The Doctor got in, waved to his daughter, and followed Mrs. Nesbit up the hill.

"You young upstart," he cried, shaking his fist at Calvin as the car turned around, "I'll be down in ten minutes and see to you!" The provost marshal turned his white steed and began gathering up his procession and his prisoners. But the spell was broken. The mind of the crowd took in an idea. It was that a shameful thing was happening to a woman. So it hissed young Joe Calvin. Such is the gratitude of republics.

In the court house, the provost marshal, sitting behind an imposing desk, decided that he would hold Mrs. Van Dorn under $100 bond to keep the peace and release her upon her own recognizance.

"Well," she replied, "Little Joe, I'll sign no peace bond, and if it wasn't for my parents—I'd make you lock me up."

Her hand was free as she spoke. "As it is—I'm going back to South Harvey. I'll be there until this strike is settled; you'll have no trouble in finding me." She hurried home. As she approached the house, she saw in the yard and on the veranda, groups of sympathetic neighbors. In the hall way were others. Laura hurried into the Doctor's little office just as he was setting Kenyon's broken leg and had begun to bind the splints upon it. Kenyon lay unconscious. Mrs. Nesbit and Lila hovered over him, each with her hands full of surgical bandages, and cotton and medicine. Mrs. Nesbit's face was drawn and anxious.

"Oh, mamma—mamma—I'm so sorry—so sorry—you had to see." The proud woman looked up from her work and sniffed:

"That whippersnapper—that—that—" she did not finish. The Doctor drew his daughter to him and kissed her. "Oh, my poor little girl—they wouldn't have done that ten years ago—"

"Father," interrupted the daughter, "is Kenyon all right?"

"Just one little bone broken in his leg. He'll be out from under the ether in a second. But I'll—Oh, I'll make that Calvin outfit sweat; I'll—"

"Oh, no, you won't, father—little Joe doesn't know any better. Mamma can just forget to invite his wife to our next party—which I won't let her do—not even that—but it would avenge my wrongs a thousand times over."

Lila had Kenyon's hand, and Mrs. Nesbit was rubbing his brow, when he opened his eyes and smiled. Laura and the Doctor, knowing their wife and mother, had left her and Lila together with the awakening lover. His eyes first caught Mrs. Nesbit's who bent over him and whispered:

"Oh, my brave, brave boy—my noble—chivalrous son—"

Kenyon smiled and his great black eyes looked into the elder woman's as he clutched Lila's hand.

"Lila," he said feebly, "where is it—run and get it."

"Oh, it's up in my room, grandma—wait a minute—it's up in my room." She scurried out of the door and came dancing down the stairs in a moment with a jewel on her finger. The grandmother's eyes were wet, and she bent over and kissed the young, full lips into which life was flowing back so beautifully.

"Now—me!" cried Lila, and as she, too, bent down she felt the great, strong arms of her grandmother enfolding her in a mighty hug. There, in due course, the Doctor and Laura found them. A smile, the first that had wreathed his wrinkled face for an hour, twitched over the loose skin about his old lips and eyes.

"The Lord," he piped, "moves in a mysterious way—my dear—and if Laura had to go to jail to bring it—the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away—blessed be—"

"Well, Kenyon," the grandmother interrupted the Doctor, stooping to put her fingers lovingly upon his brow, "we owe everything to you; it was fine and courageous of you, son!"

And with the word "son" the Doctor knew and Laura knew, and Lila first of all knew that Bedelia Nesbit had surrendered. And Kenyon read it in Lila's eyes. Then they all fell to telling Kenyon what a grand youth he was and how he had saved the Doctor's life, and it ended as those



things do, most undramatically, in a chorus of what I saids, and you saids to me, and I thought, and you did, and he should have done, until the party wore itself out and thought of Lila, sitting by her lover, holding his hands. And then what with a pantomime of eyes from Laura and the Doctor to Mrs. Nesbit, and what with an empty room in a big house, with voices far—exceedingly far—obviously far away, it ended with them as all journeys through this weary world end, and must end if the world wags on.

CHAPTER XLVIII

WHEREIN WE ERECT A HOUSE BUILT UPON A ROCK

THAT evening in the late twilight, two women stood at the wicket of a cell in the jail and while back of the women, at the end of a corridor, stood a curious group of reporters and idlers and guards, inside the wicket a tall, middle-aged man with stiff, curly, reddish hair and a homely, hard, forbidding face stood behind the bars. The young woman put her hand with the new ring on it through the wicket.

"It's Kenyon's ring—Kenyon's," smiled Lila, and to his questioning look at her mother, the daughter answered: "Yes, grandma knows. And what is more, grandpa told us both—Kenyon and me—what was bothering grandma—and it's all—all—right!"

The happy eyes of Laura Van Dorn caught the eyes of Grant as they gazed at her from some distant landscape of his turbulent soul. She could not hold his eyes, nor bring them to a serious consideration of the occasion. His heart seemed to be on other things. So the woman said: "God is good, Grant." She watched her daughter and cast a glance at the shining ring. Grant Adams heard and saw, but while he comprehended definitely enough, what he saw and heard seemed remote and he repeated:

"God is good—infinitely good, Laura!" His eyes lighted up. "Do you know this is the first strike in the world—I believe, indeed the first enterprise in the world started and conducted upon the fundamental theory that we are all gods. Nothing but the divine spark in those men would hold them as they are held in faith and hope and fellowship. Look at them," he lifted his face as one seeing Heavenly legions, "ten thousand souls, men and women and children, cheated for years of their rights, and when they ask for them in

peace, beaten and clubbed and killed, and still they do not raise their hands in violence! Oh, I tell you, they are getting ready—the time must be near." He shook his head in exultation and waved his iron claw.

Laura said gently, "Yes, Grant, but the day always is near. Whenever two or three are gathered—"

"Oh, yes—yes," he returned, brushing her aside, "I know that. And it has come to me lately that the day of the democracy is a spiritual and not a material order. It must be a rising level of souls in the world, and the mere dawn of the day will last through centuries. But it will be nonetheless beautiful because it shall come slowly. The great thing is to know that we are all—the wops and dagoes and the hombres and the guinnies—all gods! to know that in all of us burns that divine spark which environment can fan or stifle—that divine spark which makes us one with the infinite!" He threw his face upward as one who saw a vision and cried: "And America—our America that they think is so sordid, so crass, so debauched with materialism—what fools they are to think it! From all over the world for three hundred years men and women have been hurrying to this country who above everything else on earth were charged with aspiration. They were lowly people who came, but they had high visions; this whole land is a crucible of aspirations. We are the most sentimental people on earth. No other land is like it, and some day—oh, I know God is charging this battery full of His divine purpose for some great marvel. Some time America will rise and show her face and the world will know us as we are!"

The girl, with eyes fascinated by her engagement ring, scarcely understood what the man was saying. She was too happy to consider problems of the divine immanence. There was a little mundane talk of Kenyon and of the Nesbits and then the women went away.

An hour later an old man sitting in the dusk with a pencil in his left hand, was startled to see these two women descending upon him, to tell him the news. He kissed them both with his withered lips, and rubbed the soft cheek of the maiden against his old gray beard.

And when they were gone, he picked up the pencil again,

and sat dumbly waiting, while in his heart he called eagerly across the worlds: "Mary—Mary, are you there? Do you know? Oh, Mary, Mary!"

The funeral of the young men killed in the shaft house brought a day of deepening emotion to Harvey. Flags were at half mast and Market Street was draped in crape. The stores closed at the tolling of bells which announced the hour of the funeral services. Two hundred automobiles followed the soldiers who escorted the bodies to the cemetery, and when the bugle blew taps, tears stood in thousands of eyes.

The moaning of the great-throated regimental band, the shrilling of the fife and the booming of the drum; the blare of the bugle that sounded taps stirred the chords of hate, and the town came back from burying its dead a vessel of wrath. In vain had John Dexter in his sermon over Fred Kollander tried to turn the town from its bitterness by preaching from the text, "Ye are members one of another," and trying to point the way to charity. The town would have no charity.

The tragedy of the shaft house and the imprisonment of Grant Adams had staged for the day all over the nation in the first pages of the newspapers an interesting drama. Such a man as Grant Adams was a figure whose jail sentence under military law for defending the rights of a free press, free speech, free assemblage and trial by jury, was good for a first page position in every newspaper in the country—whatever bias its editorial columns might take against him and his cause. Millions of eyes turned to look at the drama. But there were hundreds among the millions who saw the drama in the newspapers and who decided they would like to see it in reality. Being foot loose, they came. So when the funeral procession was hurrying back into Harvey and the policemen and soldiers were dispersing to their posts, they fell upon half a dozen travel-stained strangers in the court house yard addressing the loafers there. Promptly the strangers were haled before the provost marshal, and promptly landed in jail. But other strangers appeared on the streets from time to time as the freight trains came clanging through town, and by sundown a score of young men were in the town

lockup. They were happy-go-lucky young blades; rather badly in need of a bath and a barber, but they sang lustily in the calaboose and ate heartily and with much experience of prison fare. One read his paperbound Tolstoy; another poured over his leaflet of Nietzsche, a third had a dog-eared Ibsen from the public library of Omaha, a fourth had a socialist newspaper, which he derided noisily, as it was not his peculiar cult of discontent; while others played cards and others slept, but all were reasonably happy. And at the strange spectacle of men jail-bound enjoying life, Harvey marveled. And still the jail filled up. At midnight the policemen were using a vacant storeroom for a jail. By daybreak the people of the town knew that a plague was upon them.

Every age has its peculiar pilgrims, whose pilgrimages are reactions of life upon the times. When the shrines called men answered; when the new lands called men hastened to them; when wars called the trumpets woke the sound of hurrying feet—always the feet of the young men. For Youth goes out to meet Danger in life as his ancient and ever-beloved comrade. So in that distant epoch that closed half a decade ago, in a day when existence was easy; when food was always to be had for the asking, when a bed was never denied to the weary who would beg it the wide land over, there arose a band of young men with slack ideas about property, with archaic ideas of morality—ideas perhaps of property and morals that were not unfamiliar to their elder comrades of the quest and the joust, and the merry wars. These modern lads, pilgrims seeking their olden, golden comrade Danger, sallied forth upon the highroads of our civilization, and as the grail was found, and the lands were bounded and the journeys over and the trumpets seemed to be forever muffled, these hereditary pilgrims of the vast pretense, still looking for Danger, played blithely at seeking justice. It was a fine game and they found their danger in fighting for free speech, and free assemblage. They were tremendously in earnest about it, even as the good Don Quixote was with his windmills in the earlier, happier days. They were of the blithe cult which wooes Danger in Folly in times of Peace and in treason when war comes.

And so Harvey in its wrath, in its struggle for the divine right of Market Street to rule, Harvey fell upon these blithe pilgrims with a sad sincerity that was worthy of a better cause. And the more the young men laughed, the more they played tricks upon the police, reading the Sermon on the Mount to provoke arrest, reading the Constitution of the United States to invite repression, even reading the riot act by way of diversion for the police, the more did the wooden head of Market Street throb with rage and the more did the people imagine a vain thing.

And when seventy of them had crowded the jail, and their leaders blandly announced that they would eat the taxes all out of the county treasury before they stopped the fight for free speech, Market Street awoke. Eating taxes was something that Market Street could understand. So the police began clubbing the strangers. The pilgrims were meeting Danger, their lost comrade, and youth's blood ran wild at the meeting and there were riots in Market Street. A lodging house in the railroad yards in South Harvey was raided one night—when the strike was ten days old, and as it was a railroadmen's sleeping place, and a number of trainmen were staying there to whom the doctrines of peace and non-resistance did not look very attractive under a policeman's ax-handle—a policeman was killed.

Then the Law and Order League was formed. Storekeepers, clerks, real estate men, young lawyers, the heart of that section of the white-shirted population whom Grant Adams called the "poor plutes," joined this League. And deaf John Kollander was its leader. Partly because of his bereavement men let him lead, but chiefly because his life's creed seemed to be vindicated by events, men turned to him. The bloodshed on Market Street, the murder of a policeman and the dynamiting of the shaft house with their sons inside, had aroused a degree of passion that unbalanced men, and John Kollander's wrath was public opinion dramatized. The police gave the Law and Order League full swing, and John Kollander was the first chief in the city. Prisoners arrested for speaking without a permit were turned over to the Law and Order League at night, and taken in the city auto-truck to the far limits of the city, and there—a mile

from the residential section, in the high weeds that fringed the town and confined the country, the Law and Order League lined up under John Kollander and with clubs and whips and sticks, compelled the prisoners to run a gauntlet to the highroad that leads from Harvey. Men were stripped, and compelled to lean over and kiss an American flag—spread upon the ground, while they were kicked and beaten before they could rise. This was to punish men for carrying a red flag of socialism, and John Kollander decreed that every loyal citizen of Harvey should wear a flag. To omit the flag was to arouse suspicion; to wear a red necktie was to invite arrest. It was a merry day for blithe devotees of Danger; and they were taking their full of her in Harvey.

The Law and Order League was one of those strange madnesses to which any community may fall a victim. Kyle Perry and Ahab Wright—with Jasper Adams a nimble echo, church men, fathers, husbands, solid business men, were its leaders.

They endorsed and participated in brutalities, cowardly cruelties at which in their saner moments they could only shudder in horror. But they made Jared Thurston chairman of the publicity committee and the *Times*, morning after morning, fanned the passions of the people higher and higher. "Skin the Rats," was the caption of his editorial the morning after a young fellow was tarred and feathered and beaten until he lost consciousness and was left in the highway. The editorial under this heading declared that anarchy had lifted its hydra head; that Grant Adams preaching peace in the Valley was preparing to let in the jungle, and that the bums who were flooding the city jail were Adams's tools, who soon would begin dynamiting and burning the town, when it suited his purpose, while his holier-than-thou dupes in the Valley were conducting their goody-goody strike.

Plots of dynamiting were discovered. Hardly a day passed for nearly a week that the big black headlines of the *Times* did not tell of dynamite found in obviously conspicuous places—in the court house, in the Sands opera house, in the schoolhouses, in the city hall. So Harvey grew class conscious, property conscious, and the town went stark mad.

It was the gibbering fear of those who make property of privilege, and privilege of property, afraid of losing both.

But for a week and a day the motive power of the strike was Grant Adams's indomitable will. Hour after hour, day after day he paced his iron floor, and dreamed his dream of the conquest of the world through fellowship. And by the power of his faith and by the example of his imprisonment for his faith, he held his comrades in the gardens, kept the strikers on the picket lines and sustained the courage of the delegates in Belgian Hall, who met inside a wall of blue-coated policemen. · The mind of the Valley had reached a place where sympathy for Grant Adams and devotion to him, imprisoned as their leader, was stronger than his influence would have been outside. So during the week and a day, the waves of hate and the winds of adverse circumstance beat upon the house of faith, which he had builded slowly through other years in the Valley, and it stood unshaken.



CHAPTER XLIX

HOW MORTY SANDS TURNED AWAY SADLY AND JUDGE VAN DORN UNCOVERED A SECRET

GRANT ADAMS sat in his cell, with the jail smell of stone and iron and damp in his nostrils. As he read the copy of Tolstoy's "The Resurrection," which his cell-mate had left in his hurried departure the night before, Grant moved unconsciously to get into the thin direct rays of the only sunlight—the early morning sunlight, that fell into his cage during the long summer day. The morning *Times* lay on the floor where Grant had dropped it after reading the account of what had happened to his cell-mate when the police had turned him over to the Law and Order League, at midnight. To be sure, the account made a great hero of John Kollander and praised the patriotism of the mob that had tortured the poor fellow. But the fact of his torture, the fact that he had been tarred and feathered, and turned out naked on the golf links of the country club, was heralded by the *Times* as a warning to others who came to Harvey to preach Socialism, and flaunt the red flag. Grant felt that the jailer's kindness in giving him the morning paper so early in the day, was probably inspired by a desire to frighten him rather than to inform him of the night's events.

Gradually he felt the last warmth of the morning sun creep away and he heard a new step beside the jailer's velvet footfall in the corridor, and heard the jailer fumbling with his keys and heard him say: "That's the Adams cell there in the corner," and an instant later Morty Sands stood at the door, and the jailer let him in as Grant said:

"Well, Morty—come right in and make yourself at home."

He was not the dashing young blade who for thirty years had been the Beau Brummel of George Brotherton's estab-

lishment; but a rather weazened litle man whose mind illumined a face that still clung to sportive youth, while premature age was claiming his body.

He cleared his throat as he sat on the bunk, and after dropping Grant's hand and glancing at the book title, said: "Great, isn't it? Where'd you get it?"

"The brother they ran out last night. They came after him so suddenly that he didn't have time to pack," answered Grant.

"Well, he didn't need it, Grant," replied Morty. "I just left him. I got him last night after the mob finished with him, and took him home to our garage, and worked with him all night fixing him up. Grant, it's hell. The things they did to that fellow—unspeakable, and fiendish." Morty cleared his throat again, paused to gather courage and went on. "And he heard something that made him believe they were coming for you to-night."

The edge of a smile touched the seamed face, and Grant replied: "Well—maybe so. You never can tell. Besides old John Kollander, who are the leaders of this Law and Order mob, Morty?"

"Well," replied the little man, "John Kollander is the responsible head, but Kyle Perry is master of ceremonies—the stuttering, old coot; and Ahab gives them the use of the police, and Joe Calvin backs up both of them. However," sighed Morty, "the whole town is with them. It's stark mad, Grant—Harvey has gone crazy. These tramps filling the jails and eating up taxes—and the *Times* throwing scares into the merchants with the report that unless the strike is broken, the smelters and glassworks and cement works will move from the district—it's awful! My idea of hell, Grant, is a place where every man owns a little property and thinks he is just about to lose it."

The young-old man was excited, and his eyes glistened, but his speech brought on a fit of coughing. He lifted his face anxiously and began: "Grant,—I'm with you in this fight." He paused for breath. "It's a man's scrap, Grant —a man's fight as sure as you're born." Grant sprang to his feet and threw back his head, as he began pacing the narrow cell. As he threw out his arms, his claw clicked

on the steel bars of the cell, and Morty Sands felt the sudden contracting of the cell walls about the men as Grant cried—

"That's what it is, Morty—it's a man's fight—a man's fight for men. The industrial system to-day is rotting out manhood—and womanhood too—rotting out humanity because capitalism makes unfair divisions of the profits of industry, giving the workers a share that keeps them in a man-rotting environment, and we're going to break up the system—the whole infernal profit system—the blight of capitalism upon the world." Grant brought down his hand on Morty's frail shoulder in a kind of frenzy. "Oh, it's coming—the Democracy of Labor is coming in the earth, bringing peace and hope—hope that is the 'last gift of the gods to men'—Oh, it's coming! it's coming." His eyes were blazing and his voice high pitched. He caught Morty's eyes and seemed to shut off all other consciousness from him but that of the idea which obsessed him.

Morty Sands felt gratefully the spell of the strong mind upon him. Twice he started to speak, and twice stopped. Then Grant said: "Out with it, Morty—what's on your chest?"

"Well,—this thing," he tapped his throat, "is going to get me, Grant, unless—well, it's a last hope; but I thought," he spoke in short, hesitating phrases, then he started again. "Grant, Grant," he cried, "you have it, this thing they call vitality. You are all vitality, bodily, mentally, spiritually. Why have I been denied always, everything that you have! Millions of good men and bad men and indifferent men are overflowing with power, and I—I—why, why can't I—what shall I do to get it? How can I feel and speak and live as you? Tell me." He gazed into the strong, hard visage looking down upon him, and cried weakly: "Grant—for God's sake, help me. Tell me—what shall I do to—Oh, I want to live—I want to live, Grant, can't you help me!"

He stopped, exhausted. Grant looked at him keenly, and asked gently,

"Had another hemorrhage this morning—didn't you?"

Morty looked over his clothes to detect the stain of blood, and nodded. "Oh, just a little one. Up all night working with Folsom, but it didn't amount to anything."

Grant sat beside the broken man, and taking his white hand in his big, paw-like hand:

"Morty—Morty—my dear, gentle friend; your trouble is not your body, but your soul. You read these great books, and they fascinate your mind. But they don't grip your soul; you see these brutal injustices, and they cut your heart; but they don't reach your will." The strong hand felt the fluttering pressure of the pale hand in its grasp. Morty looked down, and seemed about to speak.

"Morty," Grant resumed, "it's your money—your soul-choking money. You've never had a deep, vital, will-moving conviction in your life. You haven't needed this money. Morty, Morty," he cried, "what you need is to get out of your dry-rot of a life; let the Holy Ghost in your soul wake up to the glory of serving. Face life barehanded, consecrate your talents—you have enough—to this man's fight for men. Throw away your miserable back-breaking money. Give it to the poor if you feel like it; it won't help them particularly." He shook his head so vigorously that his vigor seemed like anger, and hammered with his claw on the iron bunk. "Money," he cried and repeated the word, "money not earned in self-respect never helps any one. But to get rid of the damned stuff will revive you; will give you a new interest in life—will change your whole physical body, and then—if you live one hour in the big soul-bursting joy of service you will live forever. But if you die—die as you are, Morty—you'll die forever. Come." Grant reached out his arms to Morty and fixed his luminous eyes upon his friend, "Come, come with me," he pleaded. "That will cure your soul—and it doesn't matter about your body."

Morty's face lighted, and he smiled sympathetically; but the light faded. He dropped his gaze to the floor and sighed. Then he shook his head sadly. "It won't work, Grant—it won't work. I'm not built that way. It won't work."

His fine sensitive mouth trembled, and he drew a deep breath that ended in a hard dry cough. Then he rose, held out his hand and said:

"Now you watch out, Grant—they'll get you yet. I tell you it's awful—that's the exact word—the way hate has driven this town mad." He shook the cage door, and the

jailer came from around a corner, and unlocked the door, and in a moment Morty was walking slowly away with his eyes on the cold steel of the cell-room floor.

When his visitor was gone, Grant Adams went back to his book. At the end of an hour he went to the slit in his cell, which served as window, and looked on a damp courtyard that gave him a narrow slice of Market Street and the Federal court house in the distance. Men and women walking in and out of the little stereoscopic view he had of the street, seemed to the prisoner people in a play, or in another world. They were remote from him. At the gestures they made, the gaits they fell into, the errands they were going upon, the spring that obviously moved them, he gazed as one who sees a dull pantomime. During the middle of the morning, as he looked, he saw Judge Van Dorn's big, black motor car roll up to the curb before the Federal court house and unload the spare, dried-up, clothes-padded figure of the Judge, who flicked out of Grant's eyeshot. A hundred other figures passed, and Ahab Wright, with his white side-whiskers bristling testily, came bustling across the stereopticon screen and turned to the court house and was gone. Young Joe Calvin, dismounting from his white horse, came for a second into the picture, and soon after the elder Calvin came trotting along beside Kyle Perry with his heavy-footed gait, and the two turned as the Judge had turned—evidently into the court house, where the Judge had his office.

Grant took up his book. After noon the jailer came with Henry Fenn, who, as Adams' attorney, visited him daily. But the jailer stood by while the lawyer talked to the prisoner through the bars. Henry Fenn wore a troubled face and Grant saw at once that his friend was worried. So Grant began:

"So you've heard my cell-mate's message—eh, Henry? Well, don't worry. Tell the boys down in the Valley, whatever they do—to keep off Market Street and out of Harvey to-night."

The listening jailer looked sharply at Fenn. It was apparent the jailer expected Fenn to protest. But Fenn turned his radiant smile on the jailer and said: "The smelter men say they could go through this steel as if it was pasteboard

in ten minutes—if you'd say the word." Fenn grinned at the prisoner as he added: "If you want the boys, all the tin soldiers and fake cops in the State can't stop them. But I've told them to stay away—to stay in their fields, to keep the peace; that it is your wish."

"Henry," replied Grant, "tell the boys this for me. We've won this fight now. They can't build a fire, strike a pick, or turn a wheel if the boys stick—and stick in peace. I'm satisfied that this story of what they will do to me to-night, while I don't question the poor chap who sent the word—is a plan to scare the boys into a riot to save me and thus to break our peace strike."

He walked nervously up and down his cell, clicking the bars with his claw as he passed the door. "Tell the boys this. Tell them to go to bed to-night early; beware of false rumors, and at all hazards keep out of Harvey. I'm absolutely safe. I'm not in the least afraid—and, Henry, Henry," cried Grant, as he saw doubt and anxiety in his friend's face, "what if it's true; what if they do come and get me? They can't hurt me. They can only hurt themselves. Violence always reacts. Every blow I get will help the boys—I know this—I tell you—"

"And I tell you, young man," interrupted Fenn, "that right now one dead leader with a short arm is worth more to the employers than a ton of moral force! And Laura and George and Nate and the Doctor and I have been skirmishing around all day, and we have filed a petition for your release on a habeas corpus in the Federal court—on the ground that your imprisonment under martial law without a jury trial is unconstitutional."

"In the Federal court before Van Dorn?" asked Grant, incredulously.

"Before Van Dorn. The State courts are paralyzed by young Joe Calvin's militia!" returned Fenn, adding: "We filed our petition this morning. So, whether you like it or not, you appear at three-thirty o'clock this afternoon before Van Dorn."

Grant smiled and after a moment spoke: "Well, if I was as scared as you people, I'd—look here, Henry, don't lose your nerve, man—they can't hurt me. Nothing on this

earth can hurt me, don't you see, man—why go to Van Dorn?"

Fenn answered: "After all, Tom's a good lawyer in a life job and he doesn't want to be responsible for a decision against you that will make him a joke among lawyers all over the country when he is reversed by appeal." Grant shook his dubious head.

"Well, it's worth trying," returned Fenn.

At three o'clock Joseph Calvin, representing the employers, notified Henry Fenn that Judge Van Dorn had been called out of town unexpectedly and would not be able to hear the Adams' petition at the appointed time. That was all. No other time was set. But at half-past five George Brotherton saw a messenger boy going about, summoning men to a meeting. Then Brotherton found that the Law and Order League was sending for its members to meet in the Federal courtroom at half-past eight. He learned also that Judge Van Dorn would return on the eight o'clock train and expected to hear the Adams' petition that night. So Brotherton knew the object of the meeting. In ten minutes Doctor Nesbit, Henry Fenn and Nathan Perry were in the Brotherton store.

"It means," said Fenn, "that the mob is going after Grant to-night and that Tom knows it."

"Why?" asked the thin, sharp voice of Nathan Perry.

"Otherwise he would have let the case go over until morning."

"Why?" again cut in Perry.

Because for the mob to attack a man praying for release under habeas corpus in a federal court might mean contempt of court that the federal government might investigate. So Tom's going to wash his hands of the matter before the mob acts to-night."

"Why?" again Perry demanded.

"Well," continued Fenn, "every day they wait means accumulated victory for the strikers. So after Tom refuses to release Grant, the mob will take him."

"Well, say—let's go to the Valley with this story. We can get five thousand men here by eight o'clock," cried Brotherton.

"And precipitate a riot, George," put in the Doctor softly, "which is one of the things they desire. In the riot the murder of Grant could be easily handled and I don't believe they will do more than try to scare him otherwise."

"Why?" again queried Nathan Perry, towering thin and nervous above the seated council.

"Well," piped the Doctor, with his chin on his cane, "he's too big a figure nationally for murder—"

"Well, then—what do you propose, gentlemen?" asked Perry who, being the youngest man in the council, was impatient.

Fenn rose, his back to the ornamental logs piled decoratively in the fireplace, and answered:

"To sound the clarion means riot and bloodshed—and failure for the cause."

"To let things drift," put in Brotherton, "puts Grant in danger."

"Of what?" asked the Doctor.

"Well, of indignities unspeakable and cruel torture," returned Brotherton.

"I'm sure that's all, George. But can't we—we four stop that?" said Fenn. "Can't we stand off the mob? A mob's a coward."

"It's the least we can do," said Perry.

"And all you can do, Nate," added the Doctor, with the weariness of age in his voice and in his counsel.

But when the group separated and the Doctor purred up the hill in his electric, his heart was sore within him and he spoke to the wife of his bosom of the burden that was on his heart. Then, after a dinner scarcely tasted, the Doctor hurried down town to meet with the men at Brotherton's.

As Mrs. Nesbit saw the electric dip under the hill, her first impulse was to call up her daughter on the telephone, who was at Foley that evening. For be it remembered Mrs. Nesbit in the days of her prime was dubbed "the General" by George Brotherton, and when she saw the care and hovering fear in the pink, old face of the man she loved, she was not the woman to sit and rock. She had to act and, because she feared she would be stopped, she did not pick up the telephone receiver. She went to the library, where Kenyon



Adams with his broken leg in splints was sitting while Lila read to him. She stood looking at the lovers for a moment.

"Children," she said, "Grant Adams is in great danger. We must help him."

To their startled questions, she answered: "He is asking your father, Lila, to release him from the prison to-night. If he is not released, a mob will take Grant as they took that poor fool last night and—" She stopped, turned toward them a perturbed and fear-wrinkled face. Then she said quickly: "I don't know that I owe Grant Adams anything but—you children do—" She did not complete her sentence, but burst out: "I don't care for Tom Van Dorn's court, his grand folderol and mummery of the law. He's going to send a man to death to-night because his masters demand it. And we must stop it—you and Lila and I, Kenyon."

Kenyon reached out, tried to rise and failed, but grasped her strong, effective hand, as he cried: "What can we do—what can I do?"

She went into the Doctor's office and brought out two old crutches.

"Take these," she said, "then I'll help you down the porch steps—and you go to your mother! That's what you can do. Maybe she can stop him—she has done a number of other worse things with him."

She literally lifted the tottering youth down the veranda steps and a few moments later his crutches were rattling upon the stone steps that rose in front of the proud house of Van Dorn. Margaret had seen him coming and met him before he rang the bell.

She looked the dreadful wonder in her mind and as he took her hand to steady himself, he spoke while she was helping him to sit.

"You are my mother," he said simply. "I know it now." He felt her hand tighten on his arm. She bent over him and with finger on lips, whispered: "Hush, hush, the maid is in there—what is it, Kenyon?"

"I want you to save Grant."

She still stood over him, looking at him with her glazed eyes shot with the evidence of a strong emotion.

"Kenyon, Kenyon—my boy—my son!" she whispered, then said greedily: "Let me say it again—my son!" She whispered the word "son" for a moment, stooping over him, touching his forehead gently with her fingers. Then she cried under her breath: "What about that man—your—Grant? What have I to do with him?"

He reached for her hands beseechingly and said: "We are asking your husband, the Judge, to let him out of jail to-night, for if the Judge doesn't release Grant—they are going to mob him and maybe kill him! Oh, won't you save him? You can. I know you can. The Judge will let him out if you demand it."

"My son, my son!" the woman answered as she looked vacantly at him. "You are my son, my very own, aren't you?"

She stooped to look into his eyes and cried: "Oh, you're mine"—her trembling fingers ran over his face. "My eyes, my hair. You have my voice—O God—why haven't they found it out?" Then she began whispering over again the words, "My son."

A clock chimed the half-hour. It checked her. "He'll be back in half an hour," she said, rising; then— "So they're going to mob Grant, are they? And he sent you here asking me for mercy!"

Kenyon shook his head in protest and cried: "No, no, no. He doesn't even know—"

She looked at the young man and became convinced that he was telling the truth; but she was sure that Laura Van Dorn had sent him. It was her habit of mind to see the ulterior motive. So the passion of motherhood flaring up after years of suppression quickly died down. It could not dominate her in her late forties, even for the time, nor even with the power which held her during the night of the riot in South Harvey, when she was in her thirties. The passion of motherhood with Margaret Van Dorn was largely a memory, but hate was a lively and material emotion.

She fondled her son in the simulation of a passion that she did not feel—and when in his eagerness he tried vainly to tie her to a promise to help his father, she would only reply:



"Kenyon, oh, my son, my beautiful son—you know I'd give my life for you—"

The son looked into the dead, brassy eyes of his mother, saw her drooping mouth, with the brown lips that had not been stained that day; observed the slumping muscles of her over-massaged face, and felt with a shudder the caress of her fingers—and he knew in his heart that she was deceiving him. A moment after she had spoken the automobile going to the station for the Judge backed out of the garage and turned into the street.

"You must go now," she cried, clinging to him. "Oh, son—son—my only son—come to me, come to your mother sometimes for her love. He is coming now in a few minutes on the eight o'clock train. You must not let him see you here."

She helped Kenyon to rise. He stumbled across the floor to the steps and she helped him gently down to the lawn. She stood play-acting for him a moment in whisper and pantomime, then she turned and hurried indoors and met the inquisitive maid servant with:

"Just that Kenyon Adams—the musician—awfully dear boy, but he wanted me to interfere with the Judge for that worthless brother, Grant. The Nesbits sent him. You know the Nesbit woman is crazy about that anarchist. Oh, Nadine, did Chalmers see Kenyon? You know Chalmers just blabs everything to the Judge."

Nadine indicated that Chalmers had recognized Kenyon as he crawled up the veranda steps and Mrs. Van Dorn replied: "Very well, I'll be ready for him." And half an hour later, when the Judge drove up, his wife met him as he was putting his valise in his room:

"Dahling," she said as she closed the door, "that Kenyon Adams was over here, appealing to me for his brother, Grant."

"Well?" asked the Judge contemptuously.

"You have him where we want him now, dahling," she answered. "If you refuse him his freedom, the mob will get him. And oh, oh, oh," she cried passionately, "I hope they'll hang him, hang him, higher'n Haman. That will take the tuck out of the old Nesbit cat and that other, his—

his sweetheart, to have her daughter marrying the brother of a man who was hanged! That'll bring them down."

A flash across the Judge's face told the woman where her emotion was leading her. It angered her.

"So that holds you, does it? That binds the hands of the Judge, does it? This wonderful daughter, who snubs him on the street—she mustn't marry the brother of a man who was hanged!" Margaret laughed, and the Judged glowered in rage until the scar stood white upon his purple brow.

"Dahling," she leered, "remember our little discussion of Kenyon Adams's parentage that night! Maybe our dear little girl is going to marry the son, the son," she repeated wickedly, "of a man who was hanged!"

He stepped toward her crying: "For God's sake, quit! Quit!"

"Oh, I hope he'll hang. I hope he'll hang and you've got to hang him! You've got to hang him!" she mocked exultingly.

The man turned in rage. He feared the powerful, physical creature before him. He had never dared to strike her. He wormed past her and ran slinking down the hall and out of the door—out from the temple of love, which he had builded—somewhat upon sand perhaps, but still the temple of love. A rather sad place it was, withal, in which to rest the weary bones of the hunter home from the hills, after a life-long ride to hounds in the primrose hunt.

He stood for a moment upon the steps of the veranda, while his heart pumped the bile of hate through him; and suddenly hearing a soft footfall, he turned his head quickly, and saw Lila—his daughter. As he turned toward her in the twilight it struck him like a blow in the face that she in some way symbolized all that he had always longed for—his unattainable ideal; for she seemed young—immortally young, and sweet. The grace of maidenhood shone from her and she turned an eager but infinitely wistful face up to his, and for a second the picture of the slim, white-clad figure, enveloping and radiating the gentle eagerness of a beautiful soul, came to him like the disturbing memory of some vague, lost dream and confused him. While she spoke he groped back to the moment blindly and heard her say:



"Oh, you will help me now, this once, this once when I beg it; you will help me?" As she spoke she clutched his arm. Her voice dropped to a whisper. "Father, don't let them murder him—don't, oh, please, father—for me, won't you save him for me—won't you let him out of jail now?"

"Lila, child," the Judge held out his hand unsteadily, "it's not what I want to do; it's the law that I must follow. Why, I can't do—"

"If Mr. Ahab Wright was in jail as Grant is and the workmen had the State government, what would the law say?" she answered. Then she gripped his hands and cried: "Oh, father, father, have mercy, have mercy! We love him so and it will kill Kenyon. Grant has been like a father to Kenyon; he has been—"

"Tell me this, Lila," the Judge stopped her; he held her hands in his cold, hard palms. "Who is Kenyon—who is his father—do you know?"

"Yes, I know," the daughter replied quietly.

"Tell me, then. I ought to know," he demanded.

"There is just one right by which you can ask," she began. "But if you refuse me this—by what other right can you ask? Oh, daddy, daddy," she sobbed. "In my dreams I call you that. Did you ever hear that name, daddy, daddy—I want you—for my sake, to save this man, daddy."

The Judge heard the words that for years had sounded in his heart. They cut deep into his being. But they found no quick.

"Well, daughter," he answered, "as a father—as a father who will help you all he can—I ask, then, who is Kenyon Adams's father?"

"Grant," answered the girl simply.

"Then you are going to marry an illegitimate—"

"I shall marry a noble, pure-souled man, father."

"But, Lila—Lila," he rasped, "who is his mother?"

Then she shrank away from him. She shook her head sadly, and withdrew her hands from his forcibly as she cried:

"O father—father—daddy, have you no heart—no heart at all?" She looked beseechingly up into his face and before he could reply, she seemed to decide upon some further

plea. "Father, it is sacred—very sacred to me, a beautiful memory that I carry of you, when I think of the word 'Daddy.' I have never, never, not even to mother, nor to Kenyon spoken of it. But I see you young, and straight and tall and very handsome. You have on light gray clothes and a red flower on your coat, and I am in your arms hugging you, and then you put me down, and I stand crying 'Daddy, daddy,' after you, when you are called away somewhere. Oh, then—then, oh, I know that then—I don't know where you went nor anything, but then, then when I snuggled up to you, surely you would have heard me if I had asked you what I am asking now."

The daughter paused, but the father did not answer at once. He looked away from her across the years. In the silence Lila was aware that in the doorway back of her father, Margaret Van Dorn stood listening. Her husband did not know that she was there.

"Lila," he began, "you have told me that Kenyon's father is Grant Adams, why do you shield his mother?"

The daughter stood looking intently into the brazen eyes of her father, trying to find some way into his heart. "Father, Grant Adams is before your court. He is the father of the man whom I shall marry. You have a right to know all there is to know about Grant Adams." She shook her head decisively. "But Kenyon's mother, that has nothing to do with what I am asking you!" She paused, then cried passionately: "Kenyon's mother—oh, father, that's some poor woman's secret, which has no bearing on this case. If you had any right on earth to know, I should tell you; but you have no right."

"Now, Lila," answered her father petulantly—"look here—why do you get entangled with those Adamses? They are a low lot. Girl, a Van Dorn has no business stooping to marry an Adams. Miserable mongrel blood is that Adams blood child. Why the Van Dorns—" but Lila's pleading, wistful voice went on:

"In all my life, father, I have asked you only this one thing, and this is just, you know how just it is—that you keep my future husband's father from a cruel, shameful death. And—now—" her voice was quivering, near the

breaking point, and she cried: "And now, now you bring in blood and family. What are they in an hour like this! Oh, father—father, would my daddy—the fine, strong, loving daddy of my dreams do this? Would he—would he—oh, daddy—daddy—daddy!" she cried, beseechingly.

Perhaps he could see in her face the consciousness that some one was behind him, for he turned and saw his wife standing in the doorway. As he saw her, there rose in him the familiar devil she always aroused, which in the first years wore the mask of love, but dropped that mask for the sneer of hate. It was the devil's own voice that spoke, quietly, suavely, and with a hardness that chilled his daughter's heart. "Lila, perhaps the secret of Kenyon's mother is no affair of mine, but neither is Grant Adams's fate after I turn him back to the jailer, an affair of mine. But you make Grant's affair mine; well, then—I make this secret an affair of mine. If you want me to release Grant Adams—well, then, I insist." The gray features of his wife stopped him; but he smiled and waved his hand grandly at the miserable woman, as he went on: "You see my wife has bragged to me once or twice that she knows who Kenyon's mother is, Lila, and now—"

The daughter put her hands to her face and turned away, sick with the horror of the scene. Her heart revolted against the vile intrigue her father was proposing. She turned and faced him, clasping her hands in her anguish, lifted her burning face for a moment and stared piteously at him, as she sobbed: "O dear, dear God—is this my father?" and shaking with shame and horror she turned away.

CHAPTER L

JUDGE VAN DORN SINGS SOME MERRY SONGS AND THEY TAKE GRANT ADAMS BEHIND A WHITE DOOR

AFTER arguments of counsel, after citation of cases, after the applause of Market Street at some incidental *obiter dicta* of Judge Van Dorn's about the rights of property, after the court had put on its tortoise-shell rimmed glasses, which the court had brought home from its recent trip to Chicago to witness the renomination of President Taft, after the court, peering through its brown-framed spectacles, was fumbling over its typewritten opinion from the typewriter of the offices of Calvin & Calvin, written during the afternoon by the court's legal *alter ego*, after the court had cleared its throat to proceed with the reading of the answer to the petition in habeas corpus of Grant Adams, the court, through its owlish glasses, saw the eyes of the petitioner Adams fixed, as the court believed, malignantly on the court.

"Adams," barked the court, "stand up!" With his black slouch hat in his hand, the petitioner Adams rose. It was a hot night and he wiped his brow with a red handkerchief twisted about his steel claw.

"Adams," began the court, laying down the typewritten manuscript, "I suppose you think you are a martyr."

The court paused. Grant Adams made no reply. The court insisted:

"Well, speak up. Aren't you a martyr?"

"No," meeting the eye of the court, "I want to get out and get to work too keenly to be a martyr."

"To get to work," sneered the court. "You mean to keep others from going to work. Now, Adams, isn't it true that you are trying to steal the property of this district from its legal owners by riot and set yourself up as the head of your Democracy of Labor, to fatten on the folly of the working

men?" The court did not pause for a reply, but continued: "Now, Adams, there is no merit to the contentions of your counsel in this hearing, but, even if there was mere technical weight to his arguments, the moral issues involved, the vast importance of this case to the general welfare of this Republic, would compel this court to take judicial notice of the logic of its decision in your favor. For it would release anarchy, backed by legal authority, and strike down the arm of the State in protecting property and suppressing crime."

The court paused, and, taking its heavy spectacles in its fingers, twirled them before asking: "Adams, do you think you are a God? What is this rot you're talking about the Prince of Peace? What do you mean by saying nothing can hurt you? If you know nothing can hurt you, why do you let your attorney plead the baby act and declare that, if you are not released to-night, a mob will wait on you? If you are a God, why don't you help yourself—quell the mob, overcome the devil?"

The crowd laughed and the court perfunctorily rapped for order. The laugh was frankincense and myrrh to the court. So the court clearly showed its appreciation of its own fine sarcasm as it rapped for order and continued insolently: "See here, Adams, if you aren't crazy, what are you trying to do? What do you expect to get out of all this glib talk about the power of spiritual forces and the peaceful revolution and the power greater than bullets and your fanatical ranting about the Holy Ghost in the dupes you are inciting to murder? Come now, maybe you are crazy? Maybe if you'd talk and not stand there like a loon—"

Again the crowd roared and again the court suppressed its chuckle and again order was restored. "Maybe if you'd not stand there grouching, you'd prove to the court that you are crazy, and on the grounds of insanity the court might grant your prayer. Come, now, Adams, speak up; go the whole length. Give us your creed!"

"Well," began Adams, "since you want—"

"Don't you know how to address a court?" The court bellowed.

"To say 'Your honor' would be a formality which even

your friends would laugh at," replied Grant quietly. The crowd hissed; the court turned purple. Grant Adams stood rigid, with white face and quivering muscles. His jaws knotted and his fist clenched. Yet when he spoke he held his voice down. In it was no evidence of his tension. Facing for the first few moments of his speech the little group of his friends—Dr. Nesbit, George Brotherton, Captain Morton, Nathan Perry and Amos Adams—who sat at the lawyers' table with Henry Fenn, Grant Adams plunged abruptly into his creed: "I believe that in every human adult consciousness there is a spark of altruism, a divine fire, which marks the fatherhood of God and proves the brotherhood of man. Environment fans that spark or stifles it. Its growth is evidenced in human institutions, in scales and grades of civilization. Christ was a glowing flame of this fire." The court gave a knowing wink to Ahab Wright, who grinned at the court's keen sense of humor. Adams saw the wink, but proceeded: "That is what He means when He says: 'I am the resurrection and the life,' for only as men and nations, races and civilization by their institutions fan that spark to fire, will they live, will they conquer the forces of death ever within them."

Thus far Grant Adams had been speaking slowly, addressing himself more to his friends and the court stenographer than the crowd. Now he faced the crowd defiantly as he let his voice rise and cried: "This is no material world. Humanity is God trying to express Himself in terms of justice—with the sad handicap of time and space ever holding the Eternal Spirit in check. We are all Gods."

Again Market Street, which worshiped the god material, hissed. Grant turned to the men in the benches a mad, ecstatic face and throwing his crippled arm high above his head, cried aloud:

"O men of Harvey, men with whom I have lived and labored, I would give my life if you could understand me; if you could know in your hearts how passionately I yearn to get into your souls the knowledge that only as you give you will have, only as you love these men of the mines and mills, only as you are brothers to these ginks and wops and guinnies, will prosperity come to Harvey. 'I am the resur-

rection and the life' should ring through your souls: for when brotherhood, expressed in law and customs, gives these men their rightful share in the products of their labor, our resurrected society will begin to live." He stopped dead still for a moment, gazing, almost glaring, into the eyes of the crowd. Ahab Wright dropped his gaze. But John Kollander, who heard nothing, glared angrily back. Then leaning forward and throwing out his claw as if to grapple them, Grant Adams, let out his great voice in a cry that startled Market Street into a shudder as he spoke. "Come, come, come with us and live, oh, men of Market Street, you who are dead and damned! Come with us and live. 'I am the way and the life.'" He checked his rising voice, then said: "Come, let us go forward together, for only then will God, striving for justice in humanity, restore your dead and atrophied souls. Have faith that as you give you will have; as you love, will you live." His manner changed again. The court was growing restless. Grant's voice was low pitched, but it showed a heavy tension of emotion. He stretched his hand as one pleading: "Oh, come with us. Come with us—your brothers. We are one body, why should we have different aims? We are ten thousand here, you are many more. Perhaps we are only dreaming a mad dream, but if you come with us we shall all awake from our dream into a glorious reality."

Market Street laughed. John Kollander bawled: "He's an anarchist—a socialist!" Grant looked at the deaf old man in his blue coat and brass buttons adorned with many little flags, to advertise his patriotism. Taking a cue from John Kollander, Grant cried: "I am moving with the current of Heavenly love, I am a part of that love that is washing into this planet from the infinite source of life beyond our ken. I am moved, I know not how. I am inspired to act, I know not whence. I go I know not where—only I have faith, faith that fears nothing, faith that tells me that insomuch as I act in love, I am a part of the Great Purpose moving the universe, immortal, all powerful, vital, the incarnation of Happiness! I am trying—trying—ah, God, how I am trying, to bring into the world all the love that my soul will carry. I am—"

"That's enough," snapped the court; and turning to Joseph Calvin, Judge Van Dorn said: "That man's crazy. This court has no jurisdiction over the insane. His family can bring a proceeding in habeas corpus before the probate court of the county on the ground of the prisoner's insanity. But I have no right to take judicial notice of his insanity." The Judge folded up his opinion, twirled his heavy glasses a moment, blinked wisely and said: "Gentlemen, this is no case for me. This is a crazy man. I wash my hands of the whole business!"

He rose, put away his glasses deliberately, and was stepping from his dais, when up rose big George Brotherton and cried:

"Say, Tom Van Dorn—if you want this man murdered, say so. If you want him saved, say so. Don't polly-fox around here, dodging the issue. You know the truth of the matter as well as—"

The court smiled tolerantly at the impetuous fellow, who was clearly in contempt of court. The crowd waited breathlessly.

"Well, George," said the suave Judge with condescension in his tone as he strutted into the group of lawyers and reporters about him, "if you know so much about this case, what is the truth?" The crowd roared its approval. "But hire a hall, George—don't bother me with it. It's out of my jurisdiction."

So saying, he elbowed his way out of the room into his office and soon was in his automobile, driving toward the Country Club. He had agreed to be out of reach by telephone during the evening and that part of the agreement he decided to keep.

After the Judge left the room Market Street rose and filed out, leaving Grant standing among the little group of his friends. The sheriff stood near by, chatting with the jailer and as Brotherton came up to bid Grant good-night, Brotherton felt a piece of paper slip into his hands, when he shook hands with Grant. "Don't let it leave your pocket until you see me again," said Grant in a monotone, that no one noticed.

The group—Dr. Nesbit, Nathan Perry, George Brotherton

and Captain Morton—stood dazed and discouraged about Grant. No one knew exactly what note to strike—whether of anger or of warning or of cheer. It was Captain Morton who broke the silence.

" 'Y gory, man—free speech is all right, and I'm going to stay with you, boy, and fight it out; but, Grant, things do look mighty shaky here, and I wonder if it's worth it—for that class of people, eh?"

From the Captain, Nathan Perry took his cue. "I should say, Grant, that they'll make trouble to-night. Shouldn't we call out the boys from the Valley, and—"

Grant cut in:

"Men, I know what you fear," he said. "You are afraid they will kill me. Why, they can't kill me! All that I am that is worth living is immortal. What difference does it make about this body?" His face was still lighted with the glow it wore while he was addressing the court. "Ten thousand people in the Valley have my faith. And now I know that even this strike is not important. The coming Democracy of Labor is a spiritual caste. And it has been planted in millions of minds. It can never die. It too is immortal. What have guns and ropes and steel bars to do with a vision like this?" He threw back his head, his blue eyes blazed and he all but chanted his defiance of material things: "What can they do to me, to my faith, to us, to these Valley people, to the millions in the world who see what we see, who know what we know and strive for what we cherish? Don't talk to me about death—there is no death for God's truth. As for this miserable body here—" He gazed at his friends for a moment, shook his head sadly and walked to the jailer.

For an hour after the sheriff took Grant to his cell as the town went home and presumably to bed, George Brotherton with Henry Fenn and Nathan Perry, rolled his car around the court house square in the still, hot June night. The Doctor stood by his electric runabout, for half an hour or more. Then, the Doctor feeling that a false alarm had been spread, whirred up the hill. The younger men stayed on Market Street. They left it long after midnight, deserted and still.

As the watching party broke up, a telephone message from

the offices of Calvin & Calvin winged its way to Sands Park, and from the shades there came silently a great company of automobiles with hooded lights. One separated from the others and shot down into the Valley of the Wahoo. The others went into Market Street.

At three o'clock the work there was done. The office of the Harvey *Tribune* was wrecked, and in one automobile rode Amos Adams, a prisoner, while before him, surrounded by a squad of policemen, rode Grant Adams, bound and gagged.

Around the policemen the mob gathered, and at the city limits the policemen abandoned Grant and Amos. Their instructions were to take the two men out of town. The policemen knew the mob. It was not Market Street. It was the thing that Market Street had made with its greed. The ignorance of the town, the scum of the town—men, white and black, whom Market Street, in thoughtless greed the world over, had robbed as children of their birthright; men whose chief joy was in cruelty and who lusted for horror. The mob was the earth-bound demon of Market Street. Only John Kollander in his brass buttons and blue soldier clothes and stuttering Kyle Perry and one or two others of the town's respectability were with the mob that took Grant Adams and his father after the policemen released the father and son at the city limits. The respectables directed; the scum and the scruff of the town followed, yelping not unlike a pack of hungry dogs.

John Kollander led the way to the country club grounds. There was a wide stretch of rolling land, quiet, remote from passing intruders, safe; and there great elm trees cast their protecting shade, even in the starlight, over such deeds as men might wish to do in darkness.

It was nearly four o'clock and the clouds, banked high in the west, were flaming with heat lightning.

On the wide veranda of the country club alone, with a siphon and a fancy, square, black bottle, sat Judge Thomas Van Dorn. He was in his shirt sleeves. His wilted collar, grimy and bedraggled, lay on the floor beside him. He was laughing at something not visible to the waiter, who sat drowsing in the door of the dining room, waiting for the Judge either to go to sleep or to leave the club in his car.

The Judge had been singing to himself and laughing quietly at his own ribaldry for nearly an hour. The heat had smothered the poker game in the basement and except for the Judge and the waiter the club house was deserted. The Judge hit the table with the black bottle and babbled:

"Dog bit a rye straw,
Dog bit a riddle-O!
Dog bit a little boy
Playing on a fiddle-O!"

Then he laughed and said to the sleepy waiter: "Didn't know I could sing, did you, Gustave!"

The waiter grinned. The Judge did not hear a footstep behind him. The waiter looked up and saw Kyle Perry.

"Oh, I know a maid
And she's not afraid
To face—

"Why, hello Kyle, you old stuttering scoundrel—have one on me—cleanses the teeth—sweetens the breath and makes hair grow on your belly!"

He laughed and when Kyle broke in:

"S-s-say, T-T-Tom, the f-f-fellows are all over in the g-g-golf l-l-links."

"The hell they are, Kyle," laughed the Judge. "Tell 'em to come over and have a cold one on me—Gustave, you go—"

"B-b-but they d-don't want a drink. The p-p-poker b-b-bunch said you were here and th-th-they s-s-sent m-m-me to—"

"S-s-s-sure they d-d-did, Kyle," interrupted Van Dorn. "They sent you to read the Declaration of Independence tomorrow and wanted you to begin now and get a g-g-good st-st-start!" He broke into song:

"Oh, there was an old man from Dundee
Who got on a hell of a spree,
Oh, he wound up the clock,
With—

"Say, Kyle," the Judge looked up foolishly, "you didn't know that I was a cantatrice." He laughed and repeated the last word slowly three times and then giggled.

"Still sober. I tell Mrs. Van Dorn that when I can say cantatrice or specification," he repeated that word slowly, "I'm fit to hold court."

"Oh, the keyhole in the door—
The keyhole in the door—"

he bellowed.

"Now, l-l-listen, T-T-Tom," insisted Perry. "I t-t-tell you the bunch has g-g-got Grant Adams and the old man out there in the g-g-golf l-links and they heard you were h-h-here and they s-s-sent me to tell you they were g-g-going to g-g-give him all the d-d-degrees and they w-w-want to t-t-tie a s-s-sign on him when they t-t-turn him loose and h-h-head him for Om-m-ma-h-ha—"

"B-b-better h-h-h-head him for h-h-hell," mocked the Judge.

"Well, they've g-got an iron b-b-band they've b-b-bound on h-h-him and they've got a b-b-board and some t-t-tar and they w-w-want a m-motto."

The Judge reached for his fountain pen in his white vest and when the waiter had brought a sheet of paper, he scribbled while he sang sleepily:

"Oh, there was a man and he could do,
He could do—he could do;

"Here," he pushed the paper to Perry, who saw the words:

"Get on to the Prince of Peace,
Big Boss of the Democracy of Labor."

"That's k-k-kind of t-t-tame, don't y-y-you think?" said Kyle.

"That's all right, Kyle—anyway, what I've written goes!

"Oh, there was an old woman in Guiana."

He sang and waved Kyle proudly away. And in another hour the waiter had put him to bed.

It was nearly dawn when George Brotherton had told his



story to Laura. They sat in the little, close, varnish-smelling room to which he called her.

She had come through rain from Harvey. As she came into the dreary, shabby, little room in South Harvey, with its artificial palms and artificial wreaths—cheap, commercial habiliments of ostentatious mourning, Laura Van Dorn thought how cruel it was that he should be there, in a public place at the end, with only the heavy hands of paid attendants to do the last earthly services for him—whose whole life was a symbol of love.

But her heart was stricken, deeply, poignantly stricken by the great peace she found behind the white door. Yet thus the dust touches our souls' profoundest depths—always with her memory of that great peace, comes the memory of the odor of varnish and carbolic acid and the drawn, spent face of George Brotherton, as he stood before her when she closed the door. He gazed at her piteously, a wreck of a man, storm-battered and haggard. His big hands were shaking with a palsy of terrible grief. His moon face was inanimate, and vagrant emotions from his heart flicked across his features in quivers of anguish. His thin hair was tousled and his clothes were soiled and disheveled.

"I thought you ought to know, Laura—at once," he said, after she had closed the white door behind her and sat numb and dumb before him. "Nate and Henry and I got there about four o'clock. Well, there they were—by the big elm tree—on the golf course. His father was there and he told me coming back that when they wanted Grant to do anything—they would string up Amos—poor old Amos! They made Grant stoop over and kiss the flag, while they kicked him; and they made him pull that machine gun around the lake. The fools brought it up from the camp in South Harvey." Brotherton's face quivered, but his tears were gone. He continued: "They strung poor old Amos up four times, Laura—four times, he says." Brotherton looked wearily into the street. "Well, as we came down the hill in our car, we could see Grant. He was nearly naked—about as he is now. We came tearing down the hill, our siren screaming and Nate and me yelling and waving our guns. At the first scream of our siren, there was an awful roar and

a flash. Some one," Brotherton paused and turned his haggard eyes toward Laura—"it was deaf John Kollander, he turned the lever and fired that machine gun. Oh, Laura, God, it was awful. I saw Grant wilt down. I saw—"

The man broke into tears, but bit his lips and continued: "Oh, they ran like snakes then—like snakes—like snakes, and we came crashing down to the tree and in a moment the last machine had piked—but I know 'em, every man-jack!" he cried. "There was the old man, tied hand and foot, three yards from the tree, and there, half leaning, half sitting by the tree, the boy, the big, red-headed, broken and crippled boy—was panting his life out." Brotherton caught her inquiring eyes. "It was all gone, Laura," he said softly, "all gone. He was the boy, the shy, gentle boy that we used to know—and always have loved. All this other that the years have brought was wiped from his eyes. They were so tender and—" He could go no further. She nodded her understanding. He finally continued: "The first thing he said to me was, 'It's all right, George.' He was tied, they had pulled the claw off and his poor stumped arm was showing and he was bleeding—oh, Laura."

Brotherton fumbled in his pocket and handed an envelope to her.

"'George,' he panted, as I tried to make him comfortable —'have Nate look after father.' And when Nate had gone he whispered between gasps, 'that letter there in the court room—' He had to stop a moment, then he whispered again, 'is for her, for Laura.' He tried to smile, but the blood kept bubbling up. We lifted him into an easier position, but nothing helped much. He realized that and when we quit he said:

"'Now then, George, promise me this—they're not to blame. John Kollander isn't to blame. It was funny; Kyle Perry saw him as I did, and Kyle—' he almost laughed, Laura.

"'Kyle,' he repeated, 'tried to yell at old John, but got so excited stuttering, he couldn't! I'm sure the fellows didn't intend—' he was getting weak; 'this,' he said.

"'Promise me and make—others; you won't tell. I know father—he won't. They're not—it's—society. Just that,'



he said. 'This was society!' He had to stop. I felt his hand squeeze. 'I'm—so—happy,' he said one word at a time, gripping my hand tighter and tighter till it ached." Brotherton put out his great hand, and looked at it impersonally, as one introducing a stranger for witness. Then Brotherton lifted his eyes to Laura's and took up his story:

" 'That's hers,' he said; 'the letter,' and then 'my messages—happy.' "

The woman pressed her letter to her lips and looked at the white door. She rose and, holding her letter to her bosom, closed her eyes and stood with a hand on the knob. She dropped her hand and turned from the white door. The dawn was graying in the ugly street. But on the clouds the glow of sunrise blushed in promise. She walked slowly toward the street. She gazed for a moment at the glorious sky of dawn.

When her eyes met her friend's, she cried:

"Give me your hand—that hand!"

She seized it, gazed hungrily at it a second, then kissed it passionately. She looked back at the white door, and shook with sobs as she cried:

"Oh, you don't think he's there—there in the night—behind the door? We know—oh, we do know he's out here—out here in the dawn."

CHAPTER LI

IN WHICH WE END AS WE BEGAN AND ALL LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER

THE great strike in the Wahoo Valley now is only an episode in the history of this struggle of labor for its rights. The episode is receding year by year further and more dimly into the past and is one of the long, half-forgotten skirmishes wherein labor is learning the truth that only in so far as labor dares to lean on peace and efficiency can labor move upward in the scale of life. The larger life with its wider hope, requires the deeper fellowship of men. The winning or losing of the strike in the Wahoo meant little in terms of winning or losing; but because the men kept the peace, kept it to the very end, the strike meant much in terms of progress. For what they gained was permanent; based on their own strength, not on the weakness of those who would deny them.

But the workers in the mines and mills of the Wahoo Valley, who have gone to and from their gardens, planting and cultivating and harvesting their crops for many changing seasons, hold the legend of the strong man, maimed and scarred, who led them in that first struggle with themselves, to hold themselves worthy of their dreams. In a hundred little shacks in the gardens, and in dingy rooms in the tenements may be found even to-day newspaper clippings pinned to the wall with his picture on them, all curled up and yellow with years. Before a wash-stand, above a bed or pasted over the kitchen stove, soiled and begrimed, these clippings recall the story of the man who gave his life to prove his creed. So the fellowship he brought into the world lives on.

And the fellowship that came into the world as Grant Adams went out of it, touched a wider circle than the group with whom he lived and labored. The sad sincerity with

which he worked proved to Market Street that the man was consecrated to a noble purpose, and Market Street's heart learned a lesson. Indeed the lives of that long procession of working men who have given themselves so freely—where life was all they had to give—for the freedom of their fellows from the bondage of the times, the lives of these men have found their highest value in making the Market Street eternal, realize its own shame. So Grant Adams lay down in the company of his peers that Market Street might understand in his death what his fellows really hoped for. He was a seed that is sown and falls upon good ground. For Market Street after all is not a stony place; seeds sown there bring forth great harvests. And while the harvest of Grant Adams's life is not at hand; the millennium is not here; the seed is quickening in the earth. And great things are moving in the world.

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Of course, there came a time in Harvey, even in the house of Nesbit, when there was marrying and giving in marriage. It was on a winter's night when the house inside the deep, dark Moorish verandas, celebrating Mrs. Nesbit's last bout with the spirit of architecture, glowed with a jewel of light.

And in due course they appeared, Rev. Dr. John Dexter leading the way, followed by a thin, dark-skinned young man with eyes to match and a rather slight, shortish girl, blond and pink with happy trimmings and real pearls on her eyelashes. The children jabbered, and the women wept and the men wiped their eyes, and it was altogether a gay occasion. Just as the young people were ready to look the world squarely in the face, George Brotherton, thinking he heard some one moving outside in the deep, dark veranda, flicked on the porch light, and through the windows he saw—and the merry company could not help seeing two faces—two wan, unhappy faces, staring hungrily in at the bridal pair. They stood at different corners of the house and did not seem to know of one another's presence until the light revealed them. Only an instant did their faces flash into the light, as John Dexter was reading from the Bible a part of the service that he loved to put in, "and

forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." The faces vanished, there was a scurrying across the cement floor of the veranda and two figures met on the lawn in shame and anger.

But they in the house did not know of the meeting. For everybody was kissing everybody else, and the peppermint candy in little Grant Brotherton's mouth tasted on a score of lips in three minutes, and a finger dab of candy on Jasper Adams's shirt front made the world akin.

After the guests had gone, three old men lingered by the smoldering logs. "Well, now, Doc Jim," asked Amos, "why shouldn't I? Haven't I paid taxes in Greeley County for nearly fifty years? Didn't I make the campaign for that home in the nineties, when they called it the poor house—most people call it that now. I only stay there when I am lonesome and I go out in a taxi-cab at the county's expense like a gentleman to his estate. And I guess it is my estate. I was talking to Lincoln about it the other night, and he says he approves. Ruskin says I am living my religion like a diamond in the rock."

To the Captain's protest he answered, "Oh, yes, I know that—but that would be charity. My pencils and shoestrings and collar buttons and coat hangers keep me in spending money. I couldn't take charity even from you men. And Jasper's money," the gray poll wagged, and he cried, "Oh, no—not Ahab Wright's and Kyle Perry's—not that money. Kenyon is forever slipping me fifty. But I don't need it. John Dexter keeps a room always ready for me, and I like it at the Dexters' almost as much as I do at the county home. So I don't really need Kenyon's money, however much joy he takes in giving it. And I raise the devil's own fuss to keep him from doing it."

The Doctor puffed, and the Captain in his regal garments paraded the long room, with his hands locked under his coattails.

"But, Amos," cried the Captain, "under the law, no man wearing that button," and the Captain looked at the tricolor of the Loyal Legion, proudly adorning the shiny coat, "no soldier under the law, has to go out there. They've

got to keep you here in town, and besides you're entitled to a whopping lot of pension money for all these unclaimed years."

The white old head shook and the pursed old lips smiled, as the thin little voice replied, "Not yet, Ezra—not yet—I don't need the pension yet. And as for the Home—it's not lonesome there. A lot of 'em are bedfast and stricken and I get a certain amount of fun—chirping 'em up on cloudy days. They like to hear from Emerson and John A. Logan, and Sitting Bull and Huxley and their comrades. So I guess I'm being more or less useful." He stroked his scraggy beard and looked at the fire. "And then," he added, "she always seems nearer where there is sorrow. Grant, too, is that way, though neither of 'em really has come."

The Captain finding that his money was ashes in his hands, and not liking the thought and meditation of death, changed the subject, and when the evening was old, Amos Adams called a taxi-cab, and at the county's expense rode home.

At the end of a hard winter day, descending tardily into the early spring, they missed him at the farm. No one knew whether he had gone to visit the Dexters, as was his weekly wont, or whether he was staying with Captain Morton in town, where he sometimes spent Saturday night after the Grand Army meeting.

The next day the sun came out and melted the untimely snow banks. And some country boys playing by a limestone ledge in a wide upland meadow above the Wahoo, far from the smoke of town, came upon the body of an old man. Beside him was strewn a meager peddler's kit. On his knees was a tablet of paper; in his left hand was a pencil tightly gripped. On the tablet in a fine, even hand were the words: "I am here, Amos," and his old eyes, stark and wide, were drooped, perhaps to look at the tri-color of the Loyal Legion that shone on his shrunken chest and told of a great dream of a nation come true, or perhaps in the dead, stark eyes was another vision in another world.

And so as in the beginning, there was blue sky and sunshine and prairie grass at the end.

CHAPTER LII

NOT EXACTLY A CHAPTER BUT RATHER A Q E D OR A HIC FABULA DOCET

"AND the fool said in his heart, there is no God!" And this fable teaches, if it teaches anything, that the fool was indeed a fool. Now do not think that his folly lay chiefly in glutting his life with drab material things, with wives and concubines, with worldly power and glory. That was but a small part of his folly. For that concerned himself. That turned upon his own little destiny. The vast folly of the fool came with his blindness. He could not see the beautiful miracle of progress that God has been working in this America of ours during these splendid fifty years that have closed a great epoch.

And what a miracle it was! Here lay a continent—rich, crass, material, beckoning humanity to fall down and worship the god of gross and palpable realities. And, on the other hand, here stood the American spirit—the eternal love of freedom, which had brought men across the seas, had bid them fight kings and principalities and powers, had forced them into the wilderness by the hundreds of thousands to make of it "the homestead of the free"; the spirit that had called them by the millions to wage a terrible civil war for a great ideal.

This spirit met the god of things as they are, and for a generation grappled in a mighty struggle.

And men said: The old America is dead; America is money mad; America is a charnel house of greed. Millions and millions of men from all over the earth came to her shores. And the world said: They have brought only their greed with them. And still the struggle went on. The continent was taken; man abolished the wilderness. A new civilization rose. And because it was strong, the world said it

was not of the old America, but of a new, soft, wicked order, which wist not that God had departed from it.

Then the new epoch dawned; clear and strong came the call to Americans to go forth and fight in the Great War—not for themselves, not for their own glory, nor their own safety, but for the soul of the world. And the old spirit of America rose and responded. The long inward struggle, seen only by the wise, only by those who knew how God's truth conquers in this earth, working beneath the surface, deep in the heart of things, the long inward struggle of the spirit of America for its own was won.

So it came to pass that the richness of the continent was poured out for an ideal, that the genius of those who had seemed to be serving only Mammon was devoted passionately to a principle, and that the blood of those who came in seeming greed to America was shed gloriously in the high emprise which called America to this new world crusade. Moses in the burning bush speaking with God, Saul on the road to Damascus, never came closer to the force outside ourselves which makes for righteousness,—the force that has guided humanity upward through the ages,—than America has come in this hour of her high resolve. And yet for fifty years she has come into this holy ground steadily, and unswervingly; indeed, for a hundred years, for three hundred years from Plymouth Rock to the red fields of France, America has come a long and perilous way—yet always sure, and never faltering.

To have lived in the generation now passing, to have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord in the hearts of the people, to have watched the steady triumph in our American life of the spirit of justice, of fellowship over the spirit of greed, to have seen the Holy Ghost rise in the life of a whole nation, was a blessed privilege. And if this tale has reflected from the shallow paper hearts of those phantoms flitting through its pages some glimpse of their joy in their pilgrimage, the story has played its part. If the fable of Grant Adams's triumphant failure does not dramatize in some way the victory of the American spirit—the Puritan conscience—in our generation, then, alas, this parable has fallen short of its aim. But most of all, if the story has not shown how

sad a thing it is to sit in the seat of the scornful, and to deny the reality of God's purpose in this world, even though it is denied in pomp and power and pride, then indeed this narrative has failed. For in all this world one finds no other place so dreary and so desolate as it is in the heart of a fool.

THE END

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